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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE TROUBADOURS: THE MUSIC OF THEIR VERSE

BY

KATHERINE A. MOYLES ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS.

DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE STUDIES
IN LITERATURE, FILM AND RELIGION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE TROUBADOURS: THE MUSIC OF THEIR VERSE submitted by KATHERINE A. MOYLES in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS.

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Abstract

"The Troubadours: The Music of Their Verse" is a tripartite study which presents three perspectives of the secular songs of medieval Provence: song as love, song as unity and song as sound. Chapter one examines the songs from a literary perspective, exploring the changing narrative personae established by the troubadours to propagate the ideals of *fin' amors*. The troubadour used a dual focalization of craftsman and lover, which allowed his song to be seen either as a skillfully constructed work of art, deserving of material reward and courtly patronage, or as a spontaneous outpouring of sincere and heart-felt love. These two perspectives could be held in ironic opposition, allowing the professional craftsman to stand back and look upon the image of the ideal courtly lover he created; or they could be merged in the ideal figure of a singer who would be at once a lover and a poet, equating love and song through the use of vocabulary and lyrical topos.

The Second Chapter looks at the relationship of words and music in the Provençal tradition. Arguing against the popular belief that the melodies are of secondary importance to the texts, this combined musical and poetic study examines how metre, rhyme-scheme, tonality and other aspects of poetic and melodic syntax combine to create a unified structure in many *cansos*. Six songs by Bernart de Ventadorn, Peirol and Arnaut Daniel are discussed in detail.

The living essence of song lies not in the melodic and textual notations of fourteenth-century manuscripts, but in actual sound. The troubadours lived and composed in a semi-oral culture; they perceived both music and language as sound, and performance was the primary function of their songs. Chapter three discusses the oral creation and transmission of the troubadour repertoire and urges modern enthusiasts to come close to the medieval experience of song by participating (either as singer or listener) in an expressive vocal realisation of language and music, through contemporary performance.

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Introduction

What is a song: "a short poem set to music . . . poetry or poetry that has a lyrical quality . . . [or] a piece of music for, or as if for, a poem that is to be sung"? Three of the *Gage Canadian Dictionary*'s seven definitions include some combination of poetry and music, while three involve the action of singing — "something to sing . . . the act or practice of singing . . . any sound like singing" (1072). The nature of a song is also determined by its producer and its environment. The warblings of thrush or nightingale, a chirping cricket or babbling brook are entirely different from the celebrated vocalizations of the Three Tenors; yet each result may be described as a song. Equally wide distinctions may be discerned between the songs of a twentieth-century punk-rocker, an early Afro-American slave and a Carolingian monk; in each of these cases, the song is a product of the circumstances of the songster and the era in which he or she lived. Thus a song can be viewed as a combination of poetry and music, the natural manifestation of singing or a product of sociological and historical situations. Each of these perspectives offers a valid definition of song, and each has, at some time, been applied to the songs of the Provençal troubadours.

That the works of the troubadours are songs is an uncontested fact. But the varying approaches taken towards their study have generated a wide range of beliefs concerning the nature of troubadour song. Medieval historians often treat the songs as a cultural manifestation of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Provence, dependent upon the philosophical and popular beliefs of the day, as well as the troubadours' role in court and society. Philologists and musicologists have isolated the songs as independent artworks, and taken the opportunity to argue over the predominance of poetry or music, often detaching the songs from their historical context; while some adventurous singers, seeing in the medieval songs a unique performance opportunity, have sought to breathe new life into these relics of the past, combining both words and melody in a single action, with more or less regard for the historical accuracy of their modern performance techniques. It appears from these examples that the nature of a person influences how he or she will approach the troubadour songs (or, indeed, whether they will be approached at all). Yet perhaps a greater appreciation will come from moving beyond one's peculiar sphere of interest and viewing the works of the troubadours from a myriad of angles: historical, literary, musicological and performance-oriented. From the diversity of methods of exploring the works of the troubadours, I have chosen three perspectives which will serve for the three chapters of this thesis: song as love, song as unity and song as sound. Looking at the songs firstly as an embodiment of the reigning concept of the medieval court — *fin' amors* — secondly as a structural union of poetry and music, and thirdly as an act of vocalization, or "something to sing," will, I hope, broaden one's appreciation of this rich medieval art form and understanding of the nature of song.

Song was an integral part of medieval life. Timothy McGee relates that

> throughout the period everyone sang: men and women, solo and in groups, formally and informally. The people in religious orders sang sacred music for hours everyday; peasants sang while they worked and while they relaxed; professional entertainers sang in the taverns, squares and courts; and the nobility sang as part of their courtship. (86)

Singing, instrumental playing and song-writing were clearly important arts in society;

they were part of a new cultural emphasis on leisure which began to illuminate the region of Languedoc, or Provence, in the eleventh century. By the end of the twelfth century there was a distinct, progressive society in the south of France, which Robert Briffault describes as the "most civilized" and "richest" county in Christian Europe at that time. The economic prosperity and political stability which Languedoc enjoyed allowed its nobility to cultivate interests beyond wars, possessions and survival, and the troubadours were just one of the artistic products of this civilization. They contributed to the adoption of popular cultural ideals such as chivalrous *pretz* (valour, worthiness) and *paratge* (gentleness, noble behaviour), and *fin' amors* (courtly love) — ideals which transformed the consummate nobleman from an epic warrior into a romantic courtier.

Society is reflected in its literature, and this cultural metamorphosis, which incorporated the growth of interest in song, is chronicled in the transition of popularity from the *chanson de geste* to the romance. The hero of the *chanson de geste*, best known in the figure of Roland, is distinguished by his martial abilities. Roland is renowned for his strength and courage, his *prou*, while his best friend, Oliver, is noted for his *sagesse*. Epic plots revolve around strategic military maneuvers, feudal loyalty and treason: in effect, around medieval masculine relations. Women rarely have any role beyond that of prize, possession or sacrifice, and any leisure activities are limited to practicing battle techniques, feasting, boastfully relating tales of prowess, comparing armour or battle scars, and admiring one's peers. In the twelfth century, as the epic moves towards the romance, the hero's talents and activities take on a more recreational tone. There is, as Christopher Page puts it, "a change . . . in the ethos of masculinity" (15). Not only must a romance hero be strong and courageous enough to have fought with (or against) Roland, but he must be able to demonstrate his prowess in the tournament and the hunt. His eloquent speech, comparable to Oliver's *sagesse* is no longer used only for wise counsel and diplomacy, but now enables a knight to talk persuasively to a beautiful lady, and to compose poetry. A new awareness of masculine beauty is aroused, for the hero's physique is not only admired by his peers, but found attractive by noblewomen. The feasts are no longer backgrounds for male bragging, but are a sign of the hero's *largesse*, an indication of the growing economic prosperity and an occasion when men and women come together to celebrate domestic events such as birth, death or marriage. In place of epic storytelling, the twelfth-century hero enchants his court with singing, and the theme of his song, like that of the romance, is love.

Songwriting and singing are important accomplishments for the romance hero, just as song held an important role in medieval life. Thomas's *Roman de Horn*, written only a century after the *Chanson de Roland*, celebrates Horn's musical skills in what Christopher Page calls "the finest account of accompanied vocal performance anywhere in medieval literature" (4):

> Lors prent la harpe a sei, qu'il la veut atemprer.
> Deus! ki dunc l'esgardast cum la sout manïer,
> cum ces cordes tuchout, cum les feseit trembler,
> asquantes feiz chanter asquantes organer,
> de l'armonie del ciel li poüst remembrer!
> Sur tuz homes k'i sunt fet cist a merveiller.
> Quant ses notes ot fait si la prent a munter
> e tut par autres tuns les cordes fai soner:
> mut se merveillent tuit qu'il la sout si bailler.
> E quant il out (is)si fait, si cummence a noter
> le lai dunt or ains dis, de Baltof, haut e cler,
> si cum sunt cil bretun d'itiel fait costumier.

> Apres en l'estrument fet les cordes suner,
> tut issi cum en voiz l'aveit dit tut premier:
> tut le lai lur ad fait, n'i vout rien retailler. (2830-44)

> (Then he took the harp to tune it. God! whoever saw how well he handled it, touching the strings and making them vibrate, sometimes causing them to sing and at other times join in harmonies, he would have been reminded of the heavenly harmony. This man, of all those that are there, causes most wonder. When he has played his notes he makes the harp go up so that the strings give out completely different notes. All those present marvel that he could play thus. And when he has done all this he begins to play the aforesaid *lai* of Baltof, in a loud clear voice, just as the Bretons are versed in such performances. Afterwards he makes the strings of the instrument play exactly the same melody as he had just sung; he performed the whole *lai* for he wished to omit nothing. [Page 4-5])

In the anonymous twelfth-century romance, *Daurel et Beton*, six-year-old Beton is urged by his Jongleur step-father, Daurel, to learn the art of *trobar* as well as other noble skills: "Bels filhs Beto, apendet d'esturmens, / D'arpa e de viola, seres ne plus jauzens" (1414-15). By the time he turns seven, he is an accomplished musician —

> Qua[n]t ac .vii. ans Beto sap gen violar
> E tocar citola e ricamen arpar
> E cansos dire, de se mezis trobar (1419-21)

> (When Beton was seven years old he knew well how to play the viola and pluck the zither and play the harp excellently and sing songs of his own composition) —

and at nine years old Beton is made a squire of the Emir of Babylon, where he and Daurel have been living in exile. His character is tested one day when he is asked to entertain the Emir's daughter: after playing and singing some original *vers*, composed especially for her, she tries to pay him for his performance; but when Beton repeatedly refuses the money and leaves with only a small pair of hand-carved dice, a token of Erminine's friendship, his suspected noble birth is confirmed. This distinction between professional *jongleur* and the noble amateur was important to the medieval court and lent a respectable honor to the potent image of the courtier-musician.

Just as Roland is the greatest medieval epic protagonist, so Tristan is the archetypal romance hero. His lyrical talent is legendary in all versions of his story, and he is often alluded to in songs and other romances as a master troubadour and lover. Gottfried Von Strassburg's account praises Tristan's remarkable musicianship when his leisure-related talents are admired. At age fourteen, when he arrives in Cornwall, his skill at hunting, horsemanship, games, languages and jousting is far superior to any nobleman at King Mark's court. Yet it is Tristan's singing and playing which immediately win him the court's adoration when he first demonstrates the "Breton Style" with a harp:

> den harpfete er sô schône
> und gie den noten sô rehte mite
> nâch rehte meisterlîchem site,
> daz es den harpfaer wunder nam.
> und alse ez ie ze staten kam,
> sô lie der tugende rîche
> suoze unde wunneclîche
> sîne schanzûne vliegen în.
> er sanc diu leichnotelîn
> britûnsche und gâloise,
> latînsche und franzoise
> sô suoze mit dem munde,
> daz nieman wizzen kunde,
> weder ez süezer waere,
> oder baz lobebaere,
> sîn harpfen oder sîn singen. (3618-33)

> (He played it so beautifully and went with his music in so masterly a fashion that the harper was amazed. And at the appropriate places, sweetly and rapturously, the accomplished youth would wing his song to meet it. He sang the notes of his lay so beautifully, in Breton, Welsh, Latin and French that you could not tell which was sweeter or deserving of more

praise, his harping or his singing [Hatto 90])

For the medieval courtier, songwriting and singing had become noble pursuits, exalted above the occupation of the common working minstrel; they were accomplishments desired and practiced by the nobility — both men and women — and as such were integrally bound up with the reigning ideal, *fin' amors*. The medieval courts revolved around the popular notion of courtly love; it motivated every action and pervaded every pastime. From the changing concept of vassalage and loyalty to the pleasant, noble recreation of Eleanor d'Aquitaine or Marie de Champagne's "court of love," *fin' amors* dominated courtly thought and behaviour. The ideal Provençal courtier was a knight and a lover, and as such used every talent in the service of love. A skill in songwriting and singing was especially useful to him; for a courtier could write and perform songs whose expressive words and melody would eloquently relate a message of love, evoke his lady's tender emotions and prosper his love-suit. The songs of the troubadours helped to propagate this preoccupation with love and singing for love's rewards. In the first-person narrator of their poetry we perceive a romance hero whose dual status as poet and lover reveals a means of further understanding the role of the medieval court-poet and poet-courtier. In addition, their manipulation of the conventions of courtly love establish a metaphor where the singer is first and foremost a lover, and song is love.

The first chapter of this thesis explores the changing narrative roles of the troubadour and the image of song as a metaphor for courtly love, claiming a primarily literary view of medieval song. However, a song is more than language; it is a combination of poetry and music, and as such requires an interdisciplinary approach if we are to understand the song as a whole. The Provençal troubadours were both poets and musicians; they composed their own verses and melodies — two integral elements of song. The divorce between writers of poetry and music did not occur until the late fourteenth century, when musical composition reached such a height of complexity that only skilled professionals were able to manipulate popular musical materials, and, as Nigel Wilkins relates, "no major poet could master this double art" (2). So from the fifteenth century on, though musicians still set their own words to music, poets turned their attention solely to versification. Most lyric poetry written prior to the fifteenth century (with the exception of Italian poetry) was meant to be sung, and troubadours as well as their audience thought of these works not according to divisible components, as poems set to music or melodies with text, but as a complete unit, an inseparable combination of both.

Only very recently, however, have scholars admitted that in troubadour song both words and music function together, and so should be studied together. As Peter Christian points out, such a study "requires for its elucidation both literary and musicological scholarship" (344) — a demand which presents a certain difficulty to scholars whose expertise is heavily concentrated in one discipline. As a result, critics have tended to analyse a song according to either poetical or musical standards, and only some few have attempted to unite text and melody in their examinations. When the study of troubadour songs aroused new scholarly interest in the late nineteenth century, it was the philologists who re-discovered the genre, and so the words were first considered to be the most important part of the songs, while the music was mainly overlooked. Then, as if to compensate for this imbalance, musicologists began to examine the melodies as separate entities, and succeeded only in tipping the scales in the other direction. When Pierre Aubry first published his *Trouvères and Troubadours: A Popular Treatise* in 1914, he was attempting to correct the fault of previous critics who had "ignored or shirked its musical side, and by unconsciously neglecting to emphasise the fact that the lyrical poems of the Middle Ages were intended to be sung to the poet's own melodies, have failed to make it understood that the trouvères and troubadours were musicians and poets" (3). However, Aubry adopts the other extreme, portraying the troubadours as primarily musicians and taking their poetical talents for granted. The wide rift between philological and musicological viewpoints has tainted scholarship up until very recent years; as Fernandez De La Cuesta remarks, "the great difference in perspective between these two approaches has the generalized effect of giving a partial view of the 'troubadours' — to the point that one does not know which is the better way of describing them, either as poets or as musicians — or, possibly, both at the same time" (29).

Despite the efforts of musicologists, literary prejudices still dominate the field and assert that the texts of troubadour songs are far superior to their tunes. Indeed, many unconcerned scholars, believing that monophony indicates monotony, hold that the troubadour melodies are simple, unsophisticated vehicles for the more interesting and artistically excellent poems. They have let twentieth-century conceptions of music blind them to the intricate beauty of early monophony. One must put aside one's knowledge of the past five centuries of polyphony, along with any expectations regarding harmonic practice, tonality or measured rhythm in order to understand troubadour melodies. An unbiased analysis of melodic detail will reveal not only the rich intricacies of medieval monody, but the complete structural unification of words and music apparent in many songs. To view a song as only one aspect of its whole implicitly negates the importance of either music or text, and risks tearing the threads of this tenderly woven, delicate fabric. Thus, the second chapter attempts, through a combined musical-poetic study, to examine the interrelationship of language and melody in the structure and syntax of song, defining general techniques of unification characteristic to most *cansos*, and selecting for a more detailed analysis three songs by Bernart de Ventadorn — one of the most prolific and perhaps most representative of the secular, Provençal song-writers.

So far the first two chapters have examined troubadour song as it exists in manuscript form. Indeed it can hardly be said to exist in our century in anything outside a manuscript. Yet a song is more than a lyric poem set to music which can be found printed and bound on a library shelf, or lying in folio form on top of the piano; it is more than a series of melodic notations on a line and staff accompanied by words arranged in grammatically correct and poetically pleasing order, made permanent in black and white. A song must be "something to sing" — it must possess the ability to be sung, and unless this is proven through the action of singing, it is nothing more than a set of graphic symbols and letters enscribed on a piece of parchment. Though much can be learnt through an exploration of written song, yet the recorded notations in four manuscripts are only a small part of the comprehensive experience of a medieval song. There is a vast distance between the written remains of song and song as it was understood in the Middle Ages — song as sound. Unless we come to an understanding of this perspective, our efforts are, in effect, reduced to a study of song as object, as distinct from song as process or event.

The songs of the troubadours were part of an oral tradition; they were meant to be sung. Modern musicology has come to recognize that "the process through which something becomes an artwork only *begins* with its creation and notation by an artist and only achieves some termination in being received and interpreted by some community" (Treitler 1986, 39). To the medieval court, troubadour song existed in and for its performance and reception. In spite of modern scholarship's frequent mis-translation of *vers* and *chan* as "poem," and *trobar* and *far* as "to write," both the words and melodies of troubadour songs were most probably created orally; only after a song's conception did its notation, in some patron's collection, take place. The manuscripts which contain troubadour melodies and texts, therefore, are removed from the medieval person's concept of song not only by the age with which they come down to us, but by the fact that they were produced after the song had been conceived and living for some time. The manuscripts are only fossilized remains of song, and in order to grasp the essence of song we must undertake a reconstruction not unlike a paleontologist's, examining their contents together with such clues as are found in the recorded thoughts of theoretical treatises and contemporary literature, to rebuild the skeletal outline of the troubadour songs. To progress from there to an understanding of the actual reality of these songs as they were performed in the Middle Ages requires as much conjecture as the educated guesses which paint modern portrayals of dinosaurs with green or gray reptilian skins and bestow upon them docile or ferocious natures.

Yet we have an advantage over those scientists. While Hollywood brings jurassic remains virtually to life on the world's movie screens, we can truly revive the echoes of medieval song. Breathing new life into old melodies, modern performance can introduce us to song as sound, rewarding us with the physical and spiritual experience that is song. The third chapter, then, should rightly be a performance; alas, as I am using a visual medium (for written language is rarely read out loud today) I cannot literally present song as sound. But I hope my discussion of this purpose for which troubadour songs were created will encourage readers not to rely on someone else's interpretation of an aural event, but to experience song in this way for themselves.

Chapter One: Song as Love

The Dual Narrative Focalization of Lover and Craftsman

The courtly love lyric of the Provençal troubadours employed a first person narrator who was expected to act as an 'everyman' (or at least an every-nobleman) and to be a symbol of courtly society as a whole. But the universal nature of this narrator and the conventional topos of his poems did not preclude the personal involvement of the author as protagonist; indeed, first person narrative is sometimes labelled "semi-autobiography" (Vitz 40). A medieval audience would have understood the troubadour to be not only the composer and occasionally the performer of his songs, but also the "I," the narrator and protagonist within the song. The troubadours encouraged this perspective of the lyric as an autobiographical work, occasionally naming themselves within the poems. But in order to perpetuate his listeners' belief that the song was a sincere revelation of personal experience, without compromising his very real relationship with them as an artist seeking patronage, the troubadour established a dual focalization which allowed his song to be seen through either the eyes of the poet, his 'real' self, or the lover, his 'fictional' self. A troubadour could choose to hold the two perspectives in opposition, allowing the professional craftsman to stand back and look upon the image of the ideal courtly lover which he created — an ironic distance which produces a certain tension within the poem. Or the two images could be merged in the ideal figure of a singer who would be at once a lover and a poet, and who equated love and song through use of vocabulary and lyrical topos.

In his 'real' identity as a professional composer, the troubadour invited his audience to view the poem as a song and himself as a song writer — a proud artist who skillfully manipulated the tools of his craft to create a work of art. Each poet displayed a professional attitude towards composition, taking pride in his skill at combining words and music to make a unified art form, and was careful to pay equal attention to poetry and music so that no one could fault him for either aspect of his song. Peire Vidal boasts:

A jostar e lassar
sai tan gent motz e so,
car del car ric trobar
no.m ven nom al talo, (Avalle 3.1-5)[1]

> (I know how to couple and lace words and music together so graciously that no one can compete with me in the precious noble style. [Paterson 180])

The real art of *trobar* was not in creating meaningful lyrics or expressive melodies, but in intertwining the two so that they formed an inextricable unit, whole and complete in every part. Peire d'Alvernhe and Guiraut de Bornelh both use the term *vers entier* to mean a song in which the words, music and meaning are all well matched and cleverly intertwined. This 'complete song' illustrates a troubadour's concept of the perfectly composed piece. Guiraut suggests that the quality of words and music should complement each other:

Trop volgra mais donar
mos gais sonetz joios
ab bels dichs et enters,

---

[1] All quotations from Provençal lyrics will be referenced by the editor's name, poem number in his edition and line numbers. The translation used, if not my own, will be referenced by the translator's name and page number.

entendables e plas. (Kolsen 48.9-12)

> (I should far prefer to present my gay, joyous melodies with fine and complete expressions, intelligible and smooth. [Paterson 95])

But clarity of meaning is equally important to him:

Qu'eu cut c'atretan grans sens
es, qui sap razo gardar,
com los motz entrebeschar. (Kolsen 4.19-21)

> (For I think it is just as clever to preserve one's theme as to interlace the words. [Paterson 91])

Troubadours justifiably gave much thought to the process of composition, the song's form and style and the message that it conveyed; for they were, after all, professional song writers. Though some, like Guillaume IX, were of noble families, others, such as Bernart de Ventadorn, the son of an assistant baker, had humble origins. Bernart is one among the majority of troubadours who relied on their poetic and musical skills to earn a living. Their professional status reveals a concern for not only the art of composition, but also how their songs will be received. Often in the *tornada*, the short, final stanza of a song, the poet will hint at the material reward which he expects from a listening noble. Marcabru addresses a potential patron, declaring,

Emperaire, si Dieus me gart,
s'eu me faill al vostre donar,
jamais a gorc qu'auza lauzar
non ira Marcabruns pescar,
c'ades cuidaria faillir. (Dejeanne 23.21-5)

> (Emperor, so help me God, if I miss your *largesse*, then nevermore will Marcabru go to fish in a pool which he hears praised, for he'd always think to miss. [Press 59])

Guiraut Riquier concludes his song, "Fis e verays e pus ferms que no suelh" with a similarly direct appeal to his patron:

> Reys Castellas, vostre laus m'a sabor,
> e si per vos non venh en gran ricor,
> al mens per tot n'er pus grazitz mos chans. (Pfaff 23.40-2)

> (King of Castile, I take pleasure in your praise, and if by you I come not to great wealth, at least for it will my song be by all more favoured. [Press 315])

Another aspect of the troubadours' professional identity is the representation of the narrator as a highly skilled craftsman. Troubadours took as much pride in their work as other medieval artisans, for a song was the culmination of skill, hard work and strict adherence to a precise system of composition. Arnaut Daniel describes the formation of his songs as a "polishing, shaping, ornamenting of his style and the harmonizing of its various elements into a fine work of art" (Paterson 189). Often a troubadour would compare his skills with those of a weaver, carpenter, stone mason or metallurgist. Aimeric de Peguilhan depicts himself as a master carpenter when he writes,

> Ses mon apleich non vau ni ses ma lima,
> ab que abreich motz et aplan e lim,
> car ieu non veich d'obra sotil e prima,
> de nuilla leich plus sotil ni plus prim,
> ni plus adreich obrier en cara rima
> ni plus pesseich sos digz ni miells los rim.
> (Shepard & Chambers 47.1-6)

> (I never go without my plane and my file, with which I fashion phrases and plane and file them, for I see no subtle or delicate work of any sort more subtle or more delicate [than mine], nor a more skillful craftsman in a precious rhyme, nor one who pieces his phrases together more finely or rhymes them better. [Paterson 137])

Arnaut Daniel echoes this metaphor in his description of the creation of a song:

> En cest sonet coind' e leri
> fauc motz e capuig e doli,

que serant verai e cert
qan n'aurai passat la lima. (Toja 10.1-4)

> (To this light and graceful little air I fashion words, I carve and plane them, so they'll be true and sure when I've given them a touch with the file. [Press 183]);

while Marcabru chooses the tools of a stone cutter or sculptor to extol his art:

E segon trobar natarau
port la peir' e l'esc' e'l fozill, (Dejeanne 33.7-8)

> (And according to natural composition, I bring the stone and the mortar and the file. [Kendrick 65])

Since most often their livelihood depended upon the success of their songs, troubadours would employ their own form of advertising and marketing. They attempted to heighten their popularity by boasting about their renown and praising their skill within their own poems. Guillaume IX begins the convention by saying:

Del vers vos dig que mais en vau,
qui be l'enten, e n'a plus lau,
que.l mot son fag tug per egau
cominalmens,
e.l sonetz, qu'ieu mezeis m'en lau,
bos e valens. (Jeanroy 7.37-42)

> (Of this poem I tell you that it's worth more if one understands it well, and it receives more praise; for the words are wrought all of one style, and the melody, which I praise myself for, good and fine. [Press 21])

Jaufre Rudel hopes that no jongleur will mar his reputation in nearby provinces by singing his excellently crafted song badly and ruining it:

Bos es lo vers, qu'anc no.i falhi,
et tot so que.i es ben esta;
e sel que de mi l'apenra
gart se no.l franha ni.l pessi;
car si l'auran en Cäersi
En Bertrans, e.l coms en Tolza. (Jeanroy 6.31-36)

> (The poem is good for I never failed in it, and all that is in it is well in its place and may he who learns it from me take care not to break it or pull it to pieces; for thus in Quercy will Sir Bertrand hear it, and the Count in the Toulousain. [Press 37])

Peire d'Alvernhe is also concerned lest his song fall into the hands of a poor singer:

> Ab fina joia comenssa
> lo vers, qui bels motz assona,
> e de re no.i a faillenssa;
> mas no m'es bon qe l'apreigna
> tals cui mos chans non coveigna,
> q'ieu non vuoill avols chantaire,
> cel qui tot chan desfaissona,
> mon doutz sonet torn'en bram. (Del Monte 3.1-8)

> (With noble joy the poem begins, which rhymes fair words together, and there's no fault in anything therein; but it pleases me not that such a one should learn it whom my song does not befit. I've no wish that some wretched singer, the sort who ruins any song, should turn my sweet melody to braying. [Press 89])

The troubadour was proud to be known as a good poet and musician, and he manipulated this professional focalization so that his audiences would not forget how deserving he was of their patronage. But the troubadours were also careful to cater to their audiences' expectations and tastes, especially their taste for *fin' amors*. It is reasonable to expect that love songs be written by lovers, and so the troubadours created a fictional persona within their *cansos* which met the expectations of their audience and propagated the ideal of the courtly lover. The characterization of the narrator as lover was so well construed in troubadour lyrics that it completely eclipsed the troubadours' professional life in the eyes of their audience. Courts looked to their poets as exempla of courtly love, perhaps believing that each was a model of Tristan, the paramount lover who was also a musician. One need only look at a few *vidas* to see that the troubadour's skill in composition was considered by his audience to be of secondary importance to his skill as a lover. The *vida*'s construction of the poet as a lover rendered the troubadour more accessible to an audience searching for a real-life hero of courtly love. The tension between professional and fictional identities which is evident in the poems disappears in the *vidas*, where the troubadour is always a lover first and then not a craftsman but a singer. The biographer of Jaufre Rudel, for instance, first tells us that Jaufre "enamoret se de la comtessa de Tripol" (fell in love with the countess of Tripoli), and secondly that he "fez . . . mains vers ab bon sons, ab paures motz" (Boutière and Schutz, 16) (made . . . many poems with good music but poor words). After introducing the troubadour's humble origins, Bernart de Ventadorn's *vida* relates that he possessed the "art de trobar bos motz e gais sons" (Boutière and Schutz 26-7) (the art of composing fine words and gay melodies); but the remaining two thirds of the story details Bernart's alleged love affairs with the Viscountess of Ventadorn and the Norman Duchess, Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Sadly, this fictional identity has survived as the image which pervades most modern conceptions of the troubadour — a love-lorn minstrel who wandered from castle to castle hoping to catch some small glimpse of his inaccessible lady. One scholar, for instance, gives a typical introduction to the troubadour by saying that "love which consumed him also sustained him. It was love which transformed his inner torment into poetry and taught him how to sing for the delight of mankind" (Valency 92-3). Maurice Valency has clearly been taken in by the romantic façade which entertained and enraptured the troubadours' courtly audience. It would be foolish to surmise that all troubadours, depending on their songs as a means of sustenance, would write only when gripped by romantic passion; and it is equally ridiculous to believe that these professional men and women were constantly in love. The troubadours' songs were poetic fictions — what Dante terms "fictio rethorica musicaque poita" (II.IV.14) (fiction made rhetorical and musical in verse) — and their emotions were capable of imaginary elaboration. It is most likely, therefore, that their subject matter, *fin' amors*, bore little relation to external reality. The image of the troubadour as an ideal courtly lover was sustained and quite possibly believed by their aristocratic patrons, but at its root, this image is a fictional, narrative costume which each poet could assume and manipulate as he chose.

Any poet's task, Linda Paterson suggests, is "not to express 'sincere' feelings, in other words emotions drawn from his personal life, but to create an emotional fiction which he then 'lives' symbolically" (16). In his fictional guise of courtly lover, the troubadour encouraged the assumption that his emotional state, rather than his proud craftsmanship and very real financial need, motivated his composition and gave rise to the poetic utterances of his *vers*. The song focalized through the lover was seen as a melodious expression of deepest emotions, an extension of the very love which gave him existence. The symbolic world of courtly love became the fictional world of the troubadour, and love pervaded every aspect of his poetry. The troubadours claim to sing not solely of love, but for a variety of other reasons.[2] Guillaume IX sings simply because the desire to sing has come upon him — "Pos de chantar m'es pres talentz"

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[2] Although it may be argued that all medieval feudal relations valorized love, including war which was an expression of love insofar as one's allies were loved ones and one's enemies were not, and therefore all medieval lyrics, including Bertran de Born's *sirventes*, deal with aspects of love.

(Jeanroy 11.1); Guiraut de Bornelh composes purely for pleasure — "Qu'eu.l fatz per pla deportar" (Kolsen 4.7); Bertran de Born hopes to incite war — "farai chanzo tal que, quan er apresa, / A cadau sera tart que guerrei" (Appel 27.3-4); while Peire Cardenal advocates moral and ethical values through his songs:

> Mon chantar vueil retraire al comunal
> de totas gens, e si.l deinhon auzir,
> ni l'entendon ni.l sabon devezir,
> cascuns poira trair lo be del mal. (Lavaud 60.1-4)

> (I want to recite my song to all peoples in common, and if they deign to hear it and understand it and can construe it, each will be able to distinguish good from evil. [Press 285])

Yet love comprises the overt subject matter of many troubadour songs; certainly all *cansos* deal with the art of love. But to the troubadours, it is much more than a repetitive theme. As Guillaume IX put it, the *canso* was not merely "about" love, but rather "mingled with love."[3] Love was its subject matter, but was also its source, and its very essence. In fact the concept of *fin' amors* was so deeply interwoven with the song itself, that the theme of love and the form of the song became entangled and inseparable in the semantics of the poetry.

In the fictional world of the lover, love is first of all the inspiration for the song. Sometimes this inspiration came indirectly through delight in springtime, nature, birdsong and in particular the call of the nightingale. The nightingale was closely associated with love, and a typical opening stanza would begin with the poet enjoying the delightful display of nature in springtime or hearing the call of the nightingale who is singing on account of the love which all birds feel in spring; then, stimulated by his senses, the poet's heart fills with love and joy and this in turn inspires him to sing. This simple yet enchanting opening of a love poem quickly became a popular convention and every troubadour who spoke of love at one time or other employed a nature induction:

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[3] Companho, faray un vers covinen,
et aura.i mais de foudaz no.y a de sen,
et er totz mesclatz d'amor e de joy e de joven. (Jeanroy 1.1-3)

(My friends, I'll make a fitting poem and there'll be in it more folly than there's sense, and it will be all mingled with love and joy and youth. [Press 13])

> Quan lo rius de la fontana
> s'esclarzis, si cum far sol,
> e par la flors aiglentina,
> e.l rossinholetz el ram
> volf e refranh ez aplana
> son dous chantar et afina
> dreitz es qu'ieu lo mieu refranha.
> (Jaufre Rudel, Jeanroy 2.1-7)

> (When the waters of the spring run clear once more, and the flower comes forth on the eglantine, and on the branch the nightingale turns, modulates, softens his sweet song, and refines it, it is right that I modulate mine. [Goldin 103])

The nature induction was so well loved that Bernart de Ventadorn begins ten of his forty-three songs with effusive praise of nature and the seasons, and nine others with references to the nightingale. Bernart ably manipulates the conventional opening to suit either poems of successful or unsuccessful love:

> Bel m'es qu'eu chan en aquel mes
> can flor e folha vei parer
> et au lo chan doutz pel defes
> del rossinhol matin e ser.
> Adoncs s'eschai qu'eu aya jauzimen
> d'un joi verai en que mos cors s'aten,
> car eu sai be que per amor morrai. (Nichols 10.1-7)

> (It is my delight to sing in this month when I see flowers and leaves appear and hear the sweet song of the nightingale morning and evening in the groves. Then it is fitting that I take consolation from one true joy — the hope of my heart — for I know that I will surely die of love. [Nichols 69])

In "Bel m'es qu'eu chan," the inspiration of springtime smoothly introduces a lover's despair; yet the nature induction lends itself equally well to the joy of love's fullfillment:

Can la verz folha s'espan
e par flors blanch' el ramel,
per lo douz chan del auzel
se vai mos cors alegran.
Lancan ve.ls arbres florir
et au.l rossinhol chantar,
adonc deu.s ben alegrar
qui bon'amor saup chauzir.
Mas eu n'ai una chauzida
per qu'eu sui coindes e gais. (Nichols 38.1-10)

> (When the green leaf unfolds, and the white flower blossoms forth on the branch, my heart goes rejoicing with the sweet song of the bird. When one sees the trees flower, and hears the nightingale sing, then he who knew how to choose a good love ought to rejoice. And I have chosen one for whose sake I am bright and gay. [Nichols 152])

Another common medium through which love's inspiration travels is that of the lady. The lady in troubadour poetry is, like the poet's depiction of himself, largely a fictitious character, and in some cases nothing more than a physical embodiment of love itself. In old Provençal, *Amor* is feminine; therefore a personified love is necessarily a lady, while the image of the lady is an intellectual ideal, the emblem of spiritually and emotionally perfect love[4]. The roles of *Amor* and *Domna* are thus closely integrated and, on occasion, completely merged, one with the other. The lover always describes his mistress' features and character in conventional, superlative terms, and she functions to inspire within the poet either joy when his love for her is successful, or grief when it is not. The lady and personified love both possess the same noble qualities, unlimited abilities and power over the lover. A poet, gazing on or thinking about his lady, will always be filled with love and thus inspired to sing.

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[4] Though, in many cases, the lover desires a physical consummation of his passion, seeming to imply a very physical concept of his mistress, it is the desire which is important, not the achievement of sexual union. If the lady were to grant her lover's request, she would lose her ideal status, cease to be a mirror of perfect *fin' amors*, and the poem would likely degenerate into a less courtly pastorale.

Sometimes it is indistinguishable whether such inspiration proceeds from the lady or from love. Arnaut Daniel's use of the feminine pronoun "liei" could refer here to either his mistress or the personified emotion which has been named in the preceding line:

> Q'Amors marves plan' e daura
> mon chantar, que de liei mou
> qui pretz manten e governa. (Toja 10.5)

> (for Love soon smoothes and gilds my singing, which is inspired by her who maintains merit and guides it. [Press 183])

Both love, the driving force of the middle ages, and the lady, the ideal mirror of courtly values, deserve merit and could inspire song. Arnaut leaves the reference deliberately ambiguous, showing just how amorphous and closely interwoven these two powerful images are.

Peire Vidal prefers to clarify his use of feminine pronouns by referring to the physical quality of the lady, "sieu bell cors plazen." His mistress' body becomes a dominating presence which inspires and controls every aspect of the lover's thoughts and actions:

> E s'ieu sai ren dir ni faire,

ilh n'aia.l grat, que scïensa
m'a donat e conoissensa
per qu'ieu sui gais e chantaire.
E tot quan fauc d'avinen
ai del sieu bell cors plazen,
neis quan de bon cor consire. (Avalle 20.22-28)

> (And if I am able to say or to do anything, to her be the thanks, for she has given me knowledge and experience whereby I am merry and singing. All that I do pleasantly is inspired by her fair, delightful person, even all that I nobly think of. [Press 197])

Love and the lady are distinguished as separate entities but equated in worth and power by Aimeric de Peguilhan, for he carefully acknowledges them both as sources of all good songs:

Bona dompna, de vos teing d'Amor,
sen e saber, cor e cors, motz e chan;
e s'ieu ren dic que sïa benestan,
devetz n'aver lo grat e la lauzor,
vos et Amors, qe.m datz la mäestrïa.
(Shepard & Chambers 15.33-7)

> (Good Lady, I hold from you and from Love sense and knowledge, heart and body, words and song; and if I say aught that is seemly, you should have the thanks and the praise for it, you and Love, who give me the mastery. [Press 227])

Focalized as lover, a troubadour was subject to love's direct command as well as its indirect inspiration. Arnaut Daniel composes because love commands him to do so — "farai, c'Amors m'o comanda, / breu chansson" (Toja 16.3-5) — and Aimeric de Peguilhan cites love as the source of his eloquence:

E mains bons motz mi fai pensar e dir
que ses Amor no.i sabrïa venir.
(Shepard & Chambers 15.31-2)

> (and many fine words does it cause me to think and utter which, without Love, I could not have come upon. [Press 227])

Yet in many lyrics this command to sing was tantamount to a command to love; in the language of the troubadours, love and song were one and the same, and so too was the singer and the lover. In his article, "De la Circularité du Chant," Paul Zumthor examines various relationships in troubadour vocabulary and discovers an overlapping of meaning between loving and singing: "Il me semble évident que les ensembles connotatifs (sinon dénotatifs) représentés par *chanter* d'une part, *aimer* de l'autre comportent une vaste zone d'intersection" (135). He summarizes the various connotations of the word *chanter*, arranging them in five categories —

1. Produire une heureuse harmonie sonore (évocatrice de joie et d'amour);
2. <<exécuter la chanson>>;
3. <<manifester une émotion exaltante>>;
4. <<dire l'amour>>;
5. <<aimer (transitivement ou absolument)>>.

He notes also that the fourth and fifth groups contain the most frequent meanings. Pierre Guiraud follows up on Zumthor's investigations and concludes that "*chanter*, *aimer*, *trouver*, sont sinon synonymes, en tout cas interchangeables" (417). The function of the lyric genre, Guiraud suggests, is to "chanter l'amour," and because the poem is always written in the first person, "on conclut que ce *je* identifie l'Amant et le Chanteur, le poète et l'amoureux" (418). When the images of love and lover are equalled with those of song and singer, the poet's focalization as lover begins to be concerned with music-making and seems to take a step towards the focalization of the professional troubadour. The relationship between the images of stone cutter and courtly lover is an ambiguous one. Yet the craftsman and courtesan share a pride in the quality of their song, and they are at times brought together in the single "I" of the singer, who can be at once a song-maker and a lover. In this ideal state there is no distinction between the poet and the lover — they are one and the same.

In his article, "Persona and Audience in Two Medieval Love-Lyrics," W.T.H. Jackson distinguishes "between the lover-persona, the figure within the poem who loves and suffers, and the poet-persona, whose task it is to express that love in a form which will help the lover and overcome the lady's resistance" (148). Jackson assigns a completely passive role to the lover-persona, associating every active verb with the poet. According to Jackson, it is the poet-persona who composes love-songs and does the singing. However, just as the semantics of *chanter* and *aimer* are often equated in troubadour vocabulary so the images of singer and lover are merged. We have seen how the poet can claim full responsibility for the creation of his song, completely separated from the focalization of the lover; but when the performance of *cansos* is discussed, it is the lover, not the poet, who is responsible. In this manner the singer is more closely tied to the lover-persona than the poet-persona. The singer is a function of the lover which allows this persona to enter into the art of song-making.

The focalization of the lover enshrouded the pride with which the troubadours discussed the creation of their songs, as well as their professional identity, in a veil of *fin' amors*. The lover named love as author and creator of his song, and acknowledged himself not as a highly trained professional, but merely as making a lucky find. The word *trobar* hints at a creative inspiration which allows the lover to 'find' his songs[5] rather than forge them by hard work and attentive adherence to the strict conventions governing subject matter, form and style: in the *canso* this creative inspiration is love. The troubadour carefully and conventionally ordered his poem to convey the idea that the song was a spontaneous welling forth from the lover's heart. Since the notion of unexpectedly finding a song would seem to exclude the art of careful composition, the lover in claiming authorship of his poem presented himself not as a composer, but as a singer. Just as the birds must ad lib their impetuous warbles on each new morning, so the singer, filled with love, would unthinkingly burst forth with his song, as no one composing according to rule and convention could do. Bernart de Ventadorn beautifully captured the essence of this impromptu serenade when he wrote,

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[5] The merger of meanings, "to find" and "to compose," in *trobar*, is neatly illustrated in a passage from the Provençal romance, *Flamenca*. When Marguerite finds the perfect word ("bon mot trobat") with which to respond to William, Flamenca calls her a good composer ("bona trobairis"):

> Chantars no pot gaire valer
> si d'ins dal cor no mou lo chans,
> ni chans no pot dal cor mover
> si no i es fin' amors coraus.
> Per so es mos chantars cabaus
> qu'en joi d'amor ai et enten
> la boch' e.ls olhs e.l cor e.l sen. (Nichols 15.1-7)

> (There is no use in singing if the song does not spring from the heart; and the song cannot spring from the heart if there is no true love there. And so my singing is superior because I have joy in love and devote my lips and eyes and heart and mind to it. [Nichols 81])

In this ideal state, the singer and the lover are one entity; a devotion to love automatically includes the ability to sing, and the song is a musical embodiment of the love which brings the lover into existence.

'E nonperquant tost er pessat
qu'ieu ai, som cug, bon mot trobat. . . .'

'Margarida, trop ben t'es pres,
E ja iest bona trobairis.' (4567-79; Porter 256)

Yet the love which inspires the singer is more than an emotion. When the troubadours speak of a personified love, a goddess of love, the persona of the lover hints at the pride and acknowledgement of skilled workmanship which characterized the professional poet. The image of the skilled craftsman surfaces here, but is reconfigured through the lover's focalization. Love becomes the artisan's teacher who instructs not only the art of loving, but also the art of singing: love is the supreme *trobairis*. Arnaut Daniel claims that he has been studying these arts under love's tutelage:

farai, c'Amors m'o comanda,
breu chansson de razon loigna,
que gen m'a duoich de las artz de s'escola. (Toja 16.3-5)

> (I shall compose, for Love thus commands me, a brief song on a long theme, for graciously it has trained me in the arts of its school. [Paterson 187])

Love has taught Guilhem de Montanhagol the art of poetry to such an extent that even though previous troubadours have expounded all there is to be said about love, he can still say something new:

Mas en chantan dizo.l comensador
tant en amor
que.l nous dirs torn'a fays.
Pero nou es, quan dizo li doctor
so que alhor
chantan no dis hom mais,
e nou, qui ditz so qu'auzit non avïa;
e nou, qu'ieu dic razo qu'om mais no dis,
qu'amors m'a dat saber, qu'aissi.m noiris
que s'om trobat non agues, trobarïa. (Ricketts 8.11-20)

> (But in song the first poets say so much inspired by love that to say anything new becomes difficult. Yet new it is when the experts say that which nowhere else has been said in song before, and new if someone says what he has never heard; and new when I say things which no one has said, for love has given me the knowledge and so instructs me that,

> had no one made poetry, I would be a poet. [Press 267])

Just as a master craftsman would inspect and perhaps complete a journeyman's work, love puts the finishing touches on Arnaut Daniel's songs — "Amors marves plan' e daura / mon chantar" (Toja 10.5-6) (Love swiftly smoothes and gilds my singing [Paterson 187]) — and the master's touch guarantees artistic perfection, no matter where the inspiration comes from:

> pel ioi q'ai d'els e del tems
> chant, mas amors mi asauta,
> qui.ls motz ab lo son acorda. (Toja 8.7-9)

> (I sing for the joy I have in them [the birds] and in the season, but it is Love that delights me and harmonizes words and music. [Paterson 188])

Again the lady shares love's authority and power, this time in the role of teacher:

> Vueilh far ab coindia
> chanso tal que sia
> plazens als enamoratz,
> e a midons majormen,
> qe.m don'en trobar engenh.
> (Guilhem de Montanhagol, Ricketts 12.6-10)

> (I wish to make with grace a song such as may please those enamoured, and above all my mistress, who gives me skill in composing songs. [Press 273])

Bernart de Ventadorn does not need to emphasise that love teaches him the art of singing; he merely implies that it is included in learning the art of love. When he has been taught all there is to know about love, he says, then he will be a qualified troubadour:

> Ventadorn er greu mais ses chantador,
> que.l plus cortes e que mais sap d'amor
> m'en essenhet aitan com eu n'apren. (Nichols 13.55-57)

> (Ventadorn will scarcely be without a troubadour any longer, for the most courteous of all, the one who knows most about love, has taught me everything I know about it. [Nichols 77])

By depicting love as the greatest troubadour, the focalization of the lover is merged with that of the craftsman into the ideal state of the singer. The effect of this unity is heightened, however, by the equation of the qualities and characteristics of both courtly love and the courtly lyric. Love and song are bound together within the semantics of troubadour poetry, joined by equal rules concerning hierarchy, levels of moral worth and artistic quality, and degrees of purity, honesty and faithfulness.

The troubadour, receiving instruction from love on how to be a singer and a lover, is careful to balance the relationship between the quality of his love and the quality of the song. Troubadours protested the sincerity of their passion, for their audience believed that "the greater the devotion of the love, the greater, supposedly, the mastery of the poetic art" (Valency 108). Bernart de Ventadorn, for example, claims that his singing is of superior quality because his heart is centred on love and he has devoted his entire being to it:

> Non es meravelha s'eu chan
> melhs de nul autre chantador,
> que plus me tra.l cors vas amor
> e melhs sui faihz a so coman.
> Cor e cors e saber e sen
> e fors' e poder i ai mes.
> Si.m tira vas amor lo fres
> que vas autra part no.m aten. (Nichols 31.1-8)

> (It is no wonder that I sing better than any other singer, for my heart draws me more toward love and I am better suited to its command. In it I have placed my heart and body, my knowledge and mind, my force and power. The rein so draws me toward love that I turn my attention nowhere else. [Nichols 133-34])

When a great lady is the object of the lover's devotion, love demands that his song also be great. Arnaut Daniel realizes that his final product must surpass that of all other song writers, for his lady (in the typical fashion of the courtly lyric) surpasses all other women:

> e doncas ieu q'en la genssor entendi
> dei far chansson sobre totz de bell'obra
> que no.i aia mot fals ni rim' estrampa; (Toja 12.6-8)

> (and therefore I who aspire to the most gracious of ladies ought to make a song of beautiful craft, surpassing all other men, so that there is no false word in it nor faulty rhyme. [Paterson 188])

Bernart de Ventadorn, in contrast, fears that his song writing will not live up to the standards love has set for him, for the master troubadour demands the highest workmanship:

> Ja mos chantars no m'er onors
> encontral gran joi c'ai conques,
> c'ades m'agr' ops si tot s'es bos
> mos chans fos melher que non es.
> Aissi com es l'amors sobrana
> per que mos cors melhur' e sana,
> deuri' esser sobras lo vers qu'eu fatz
> sobre totz chans e volgutz e chantatz. (Nichols 22.1-8)

> (Never will my song be an honor worthy of the great joy I have won. For I always need to make my song better than it is, although it is good. Just as the love in which my heart is improved and cured is superior, so the verse I make should be superior to all songs either intended or sung. [Nichols 102])

The quality of a song, like the quality of love, was not determined merely by being superior to that of another troubadour or lover. Just as careful consideration was given to the way in which words and melodies fit together, so the manner in which the form and style of the song related to the subject matter and the meaning implied by the author was equally important. To discuss a "frivolous and menial" topic, Guiraut de Bornelh constructs a "low sirventes," with "low words," composed on a "low" musical theme —

> Vill sirventes leugier e venassal
> vueilh de vill motz en vill racon bastir. (Kolsen 33.1-2)

A good song, however, would have a noble subject with words and melody to match and could admit nothing base or false to mar the purity of the love being sung. Linda Paterson writes: "love inspires the poet both to improve his moral worth and to compose fine songs" (189). The focalizations of poet and lover, then, are paralleled through the level of not only artistic but also moral perfection which the troubadour aspires to attain in each role. The troubadour's quest to find 'pure' love is synonomous with his creation of a 'pure' song; his desire for love and artistic perfection is inseparable. Marcabru declares, in "Cortesamen vuoill comenssar," that pure love and pure singing belong together, while in "Al son desviat chantaire" he warns against the temptations of false love. A *vers entier* should be perfect from an artistic point of view, but would also "depend on the good character and courtly qualities of the poet, and the truth of the poem" (Paterson 69). A song based on lies or vanity is worth nothing to Peire d'Alvernhe:

> Foudat fai e nescies
> qui vers fai de truandia.
> Pessa qu'entiers ni fragz sia?
> Que chanso ni sirventes
> ni stribot ni arlotes
> non es, mas quan lichairia. (Del Monte 5.19-24)

(He who composes a song of lies commits folly and ignorance. Does he think it can be 'whole' or 'broken'? For it is not a *canso* or a *sirventes* or

> an *estribot* or an *arlotes*, but nothing but futility. [Paterson 68])

The perfect troubadour song would not only unite eloquent words and a pleasing tune, but would suggest the true desire of the poet for the pure love of a superior lady. For many troubadours, the joy of love, moral worth and artistic perfection were bound together in the art of creating songs.

The assimilation of the lover and the singer was encouraged by presenting common obstacles to artistic perfection and true love. Peire Vidal points out that love and song have similar enemies at the court; for while "fals lauzengiers" [faithless slanderers] try to destroy his love, false "domn'e.l drutz" neglect "chant e solatz" (Avalle 24). Therefore, both love and song must remain pure to avoid slander:

Pus mos coratges s'esclarzis
per selh joy don ieu suy jauzens,
e vey qu'Amors part e cauzis,
per qu'ieu n'esper estre manens,
ben dey tot mon chant esmerar
qu'om re no m'i puesca falsar,
que per pauc es hom desmentitz. (Marcabru, Dejeanne 40.1-7)

> (Since my heart grows bright by that joy which I rejoice in, and I see that Love selects and singles out — whereby I hope to be richly endowed — I must indeed make all my song pure so that none might fault me for anything in it, since for little is one belied. [Press 51])

Marcabru's song begins from the perspective of a lover's joy and hope, but the professional focalization quickly interposes. His hope to be "richly endowed" could indicate material payment as well as amorous success, and his concern for the purity and reputation of his song echoes the craftsman's pride while suggesting the lover's fear of slander.

False slander is not the only obstacle shared by love and song. Grief at a lady's coldness can dull the inspiration of love, and render the singer unable to sing: "e no.us cugetz que de mon dol / esper a far bona chanson" (Arnaut Daniel, Toja 6.3-4) ("and do not imagine that in my grief I hope to compose a fine song" [Paterson 188]). In perhaps his most popular song, "Can vei la lauzeta mover," Bernart de Ventadorn painfully cries out that he must cease from singing and hide from love, for his love is unrequited. Elsewhere he laments to a friend that he cannot respond in song, for his lady has been deceitful —

> Lemozi, no.us posc en chantan
> respondre ne i sai avenir,
> mos cors me vol de dol partir. (Nichols 14.7-9)

> (Lemozi, I cannot answer you in singing; I would not know where to begin. My heart wants to break from grief. [Nichols 79])

Without the pity of his lady, the troubadour has no love, and without love there is no song. He can therefore no longer be either a lover or a singer. "A song which doesn't come from the heart is of little value," Bernart writes, "and since the joy of love forsakes me, I have forsaken song" ("Pauc val chans que dal cor no ve; / e pois jois d'amor laisse me, / eu ai chan . . . laissat" [Nichols 32.12-14]). A lady's indifference or even the lack of her physical proximity can cause a troubadour to lose his ability to sing. Peire Vidal declares that he has neither heart nor mind to sing — "n'ai cor ni talan / De far chanso" — when he is far from the sweet country where his beloved dwells: "Quar tant m'es luenh la terr'e.l dous pais / On es selha vas cui ieu sui aclis" (Avalle 19).

We have seen how the troubadours' professional and fictional focalizations could be merged to produce a singer who equates love and song in many ways. Yet a poet could also keep the two perspectives separate and use them side by side to create an ironic distance between the poet and the lover. When viewed as two very distinct yet equally valid portrayals of the medieval troubadour, their juxtaposition creates a tension which is similar to the irony inherent in calling both Bach, who composed according to the strict discipline of Baroque formalism, and Ella Fitzgerald, whose modern jazz vocalizations are improvised at each performance, great musicians. Several troubadours recognized and used this ironic distance so that they, as poet, could regard the lover they impersonated. They could share the ideal experiences and emotions of the lover, propogate the notions of *fin' amors* and at the same time expose its illusory qualities by reminding the audience of the real function of a court poet. The troubadour was thus enabled "to identify courtly love as a fiction and at the same time to dignify it above every other love in order to fulfill his office" (Goldin 1975, 71).

Many poems begin and end with the troubadour's 'real' persona, while the intervening stanzas revert to a courtly lover's perspective. This creates a clear distinction between narrator and protagonist, though both relate their verse in the first person. However, several poets present a less jarring transition between the two focalizations, reminding us that both poet and lover can be part of the same troubadour. Jaufre Rudel begins a song from the craftsman's perspective, discussing the rules of composition, then switches abruptly to the lover's viewpoint at the beginning of the second stanza:

> No sap chantar qui so non di,
> ni vers trobar qui motz no fa,
> ni conois de rima co.s va
> si razo non enten en si.
> mas lo mieus chans comens' aissi,
> com plus l'auziretz, mais valra.
>
> Nuils hom no.s meravill de mi

> s'ieu am so que ja no.m veira,
> que.l cor joi d'autr'amor non ha
> mas de cela qu'ieu anc no vi. (Jeanroy 6.1-10)

> (He cannot sing who gives no melody, or compose verse who sets down no words, nor does he know how rhyme goes unless in himself he understands the rules; but my own song begins in this way, the more you hear it the better it will be.
>
> Let no man marvel at me if I love that which will never see me, for in the heart there's joy of no other love but of that one which I never saw. [Press 35])

Yet a subtle correlation between the art of song-making and loving is being set up; by commenting on the unorthodox nature of his composition, the poet is in fact establishing the lover's situation. Just as a troubadour cannot sing without a melody or compose without words, so a lover cannot love without seeing his lady, even as a blind man could not be an adequate lover; for it was well known that love began with the sight of beauty. Andreas Capellanus begins the first chapter of his twelfth-century treatise, *The Art of Courtly Love*, by saying: "amor est passio quae dam innata procendens ex visione et immoderata cogitatione formae alterious sexus" (3) (love is a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex [Parry 28]). The troubadour's audience was well aware of this prerequisite; even before Andreas' written code which declared, "est nunc videre, quae sint aptae personae ad amoris arma ferenda" (11), it was understood that a blind man could not fall in love. So a listener would have realized the miraculousness of the poet's love without sight. Jaufre Rudel prepares them for the marvel of this unseen love by establishing the parallel between singing and loving. Jaufre initially points out that the song is working in opposition to the rules of composition, thereby alerting his audience to expect a love which will also run contrary to the general rule. As we are invited to hear more of the song, and see if it does indeed get better, so we are invited to judge the quality of Jaufre's blind love.

Sordello's "Bel m'es ab motz leugiers a far" similarly creates a thematic correlation between the two distinct focalizations of his narrator. He moves from an introductory stanza giving the reason for his choosing the "trobar leu" (simple style of composition) to a description of the simple manner in which his lady easily captured his heart with a single glance:

> Bel m'es ab motz leugiers a far
> chanson plazen et ab guay so,
> que.l melher que hom pot trïar,
> a cuy m'autrey e.m ren e.m do,
> no vol ni.l plai chantar de mäestrïa;
> e mas no.lh plai, farai hueymais mon chan
> leu a chantar e d'auzir agradan,
> clar d'entendre e prim, qui prim lo trïa.
>
> Gen mi saup mon fin cor emblar
> al prim qu'ieu mirey sa faisso,
> ab un dous amoros esguar
> que.m lansero siey huelh lairo.
> Ab selh esgar m'intret en aisselh dïa
> amors pels huelhs al cor d'aital semblan
> que.l cor en trays e mes l'a son coman,
> si qu'ab lieys es, on qu'ieu an ni estïa. (Boni 4.1-11)

> (I'm happy to make with easy words a pleasant song, and with gay melody, for the best lady that a man can choose, to whom I devote and yield and render myself, neither desires nor is pleased by the elaborate style of singing; and since she is not pleased by it, I'll make from now on my song easy to sing and agreeable to hear, clear and simple to understand, for one who chooses it simple.
>
> Gently she knew how to steal my pure heart from me, when I first beheld her, with a sweet and loving glance which her thieving eyes cast me. With that glance, on that day, love entered through the eyes into my heart, and

> in such guise that it drew my heart from me and placed it at her command, so that it is with her wherever I go or dwell. [Press 243])

There is a playful bantering evident in the contrasted moods of the two voices. In the first stanza the narrator is easy-going, willing to give in to his lady's whims, but there is just a hint of condescension as the poet lowers his standards to create a plain and simple song. Love and his lady, though worthy of praise, are just simple things, shallower and perhaps less significant than the complex artistry Sordello is capable of creating. The poet seems to consider it more worthy to be a great artist than a great lover. But then as the lover's focalization takes over, the narrator is all tender solicitude, and completely bound to the conventions of courtly love. The emotions of his *fin cor* become more important than intellectual word play and Sordello shows no regret in yielding to his simple, gentle mistress.

W.T.H. Jackson suggests that Bernart de Ventadorn is "very fond [of] . . . playing off one persona against the other and comparing the active poet-persona with the passive lover-persona" (151).[6] Yet Bernart is equally adept at merging the two personae. It is perhaps in his songs that the images of song and love are most subtly interlaced, for he seems to use the terms almost interchangeably. Bernart consciously characterizes himself as a singer and a lover, and allows almost no hint of the professional composer to pervade his lyrics. When he speaks of being in a lady's service —

> Doman vostre sui e serai
> del vostre servizi garnitz.
> Vostr' om sui juratz e plevitz

---

[6] Jackson's delineation of the roles of poet and lover are different from my own. I do not see the lover-persona as primarily passive, and attribute such actions as singing and wooing a lady to the lover rather than to the poet, as Jackson does.

e vostre m'era des abans. (Nichols 33.29-35)

> (Lady, I am yours and will be, ready for your service. I am your man, sworn and pledged, and yours I was before. [Nichols 140]) —

there is no doubt that he means the service of love, not the service of a paid musician; and though he sometimes expresses his hope to be rewarded for this service — "car totz bos fainhz vei lauzar al fenir" (Nichols 1.8); (for I see all good things praised at their end [Nichols 43]) — the implication is that of a lover's reward rather than a monetary fee. Bernart's professional status appears when, in closing his songs, he often addresses his *jongleurs*: "Ma chanson apren a dire, / Alegert; e tu, Ferran, / porta la.m a mo Tristan" (Nichols 4.61-63); (Learn to sing my song, Alegret; and you, Ferran, carry it to my Tristan [Nichols 53]). Yet even here Bernart emphasises his position as a lover; he wishes the *jongleurs'* singing to impress his lady, not for the sake of his professional reputation, but rather to evoke his lady's love, and often complements his singing instructions with an additional, more personal, message:

Messatgers, vai e cor
e di.m a la gensor
la pena e la dolor
que.n trac e.l martire. (Nichols 44.73-76)

> (Go messager, run, speak for me; tell the fairest lady of the pain, the grief, and the torment which I suffer for her. [Nichols 172])

Bernart's narrative voice remains aloof from the persona of craftsman, and manages to attain that ideal state where the lover has adopted the role of the singer. Consider the unity of love and song in the following opening stanza of a typical poem by Bernart:

Ara no vei luzir solelh,

tan me son escurzit li rai,
e ges per aisso no.m esmai,
c'una clardatz me solelha
d'amor qu'ins el cor me raya;
e, can autra gens s'esmaya,
eu melhur enans que sordei,
per que mos chans no sordeya. (Nichols 7.1-8)

> (Now I cannot see the sun shining, so hidden are the rays from me; and yet, I am not alarmed by this, because one brightness shining within my heart illuminates me with love. And, when other people are alarmed, I get better rather than worse, because my song does not fail. [Nichols 61])

In lines four and five the poet avows that he is not alarmed, "no.m esmai," because of the brightly shining love in his heart. He then repeats that, though other people "s'esmaya" he is not; and we would expect to hear a repetition of his original reason for this hope. Instead Bernart substitutes "mos chans" for "amor," inverting the audience's anticipation of another apostrophe to unfailing love. The moral implications of the last three lines demonstrate the singer's concern that the success of his love and reputation of his lady are bound up in the purity of his song.

Bernart's union of singer and lover allows a focalization in which love and song become one and the same. Yet despite the subtlety of this union, it is still a relationship on two levels. In "Amics Bernartz de Ventadorn" a smooth transition from a discussion of song to a discussion of love is spread out over three stanzas:

Amics Bernartz de Ventadorn,
com vos podetz de chant sofrir
can aissi auzetz esbaudir
lo rossinholet noih e jorn?
Auyatz lo joi que demena.
Tota noih chanta sotz la flor,
melhs s'enten que vos en amor.

Peire, lo dormir e'l sojorn

am mais qu.l rossinhol auvir,
ni ja tan no.m sabriatz dir
que mais en la folia torn.
Deu lau fors sui de chadena,
e vos e tuih l'autr' amador
etz remazut en la folor.

Bernartz, greu er pros ni cortes
que ab amor no.s sap tener,
ni ja tan no.us fara doler
que mais no valha c'autra bes,
car, si fai mal, pois abena.
Greu a om gran be ses dolor,
mas ades vens lo jois lo plor. (Nichols 2.1-21)

> (Bernart de Ventadorn, my friend, how can you refrain from singing when you hear the nightingale rejoicing day and night? Listen to the joy he expresses. All night he sings under the flower; he understands love better than you do.
>
> Peire, I prefer sleep and rest to listening to the nightingale. As a matter of fact, no arguments you could find would persuade me to return to that foolishness. Thank God I am out of irons, while you and all the other lovers have stuck to folly.
>
> Bernart, he who does not know how to stay firm in love is hardly worthy or chivalrous. Love will be worth more than any other good, even if it causes you so much grief; for if it causes pain, it compensates later on. A man can seldom have any real good without pain, but the joy always surpasses the weeping. [Nichols 46])

The poet begins the dialogue by having "Peire" allude to a conventional opening stanza, introducing his theme of love by association with the nightingale: "my friend, how can you refrain from singing when you hear the nightingale rejoicing day and night?" In the immediate response, Bernart declares that he will not only refrain from singing, but he will not even listen to the nightingale, and is glad to be free from such foolishness. The conversation has previously focused on two activities, so one assumes that this foolishness refers to either listening to the nightingale or singing. Then Bernart indicates that this folly belongs exclusively to lovers. Peire's next statement chastises Bernart not for giving up singing, as we would expect, but for not remaining steadfast in love. The audience is now aware that singing, listening to the nightingale and loving are all activities performed by lovers, which are equal in the eyes of the singer. Not until the sixth stanza does Bernart admit the reason why he refuses to sing — a "faithless woman." Song and love have been paralleled through the singer's focalization. But a tension is created when the harmonious images of the nightingale who sings day and night, and the balance of pain and joy in love, are contrasted within the dialogue. "Peire" is the ideal courtly lover here; he is oblivious to all else but the rules of love, and he believes in the joy it can bring. "Bernart," however, seeks to distance himself from the lover's focalization. He does not include himself among "tuih l'atr'amador" and calls their love "folor." Yet his grief has been inflicted by love and therefore Bernart cannot extricate himself from the lover's perspective. As long as he recalls that he "l'amava finamen" (truly loved her), he will remain emotionally involved with *fin' amors* and will be unable to regard it with the professional poet's distance and see that it is primarily fictional.

The narrator of "Estat ai com om esperdutz" is, at the beginning of the poem, more successful in his attempt to view love from the poet's focalization, and the distinct perspectives of the professional poet and the courtly lover are discernable despite the overall fusion of love and song. The audience would know that a courtly lover ought to be distracted by love, but the narrator calls this "folatge" and insists that he only resembled a lover:

> Estat ai com om esperdutz
> per amor un lonc estatge,

> mas era.m sui reconogutz
> qu'eu avia faih folatge.
> C'a totz era de salvatge,
> car m'era de chan recrezutz,
> et on eu plus estera mutz,
> mais feira de mon damnatge. (Nichols 19.1-8)

> (I have been like one distracted by love for a long time, but now I realize that I have acted foolishly; for everything has been unpleasant since I gave up singing, and the longer I remain mute, the more I contribute to my own undoing. [Nichols 92])

The "damnatge" caused by refraining from singing could indicate financial ruin or damage to the troubadour's professional career as well as emotional and social harm. The narrator continues the poem by resolving to sing again, but not to love again — the union of love and song has been broken as the narrator's professional focalization gains strength. Instead, the singer turns his back on the traditional values of *fin' amors* and resolves to mock love's rules by becoming fickle and deceitful:

> de cui que.m volha serai drutz
> e trametrai per tot salutz
> et aurai mais cor volatge. (14-16)

> (I shall be the lover of anyone who wants me; I shall send greetings to everyone, and I shall have a fickle heart. [Nichols 92-3])

But in the following stanzas this attitude is quickly dispelled as the singer realizes that he does not know how to be deceitful — "pero no vei domneydador / que menhs de me s'i entenda" (19-20) ("and yet I see no lover who understands less than I how to be such" [Nichols 93]) — and so he returns to love's tutelage, renewing his adherence to courtly ideals and devoting his attention to a new lady who is "platz li c'a mere.m prenda" (26) ("pleased to receive me graciously" [Nichols 93]). The lover's focalization has completely reclaimed the narrator, and once again love and song are merged. In his new mistress Bernart finds a renewed ability to sing, despite his unhappy first relationship:

> Deu lau qu'era sai chantar,
> mal grat n'aya na Dous-Esgar
> e cil a cui s'accompanha.
>
> Fis-Jois, ges no.us posc oblidar,
> ans vos am e.us volh e.us tenh char,
> car m'etz de bela companha. (49-54)

> (I praise God that now I can sing in spite of lady Dous-Esgar and the one who keeps her company.
>
> Fis-Jois, I cannot forget you; rather, I love you, want you, and cherish you because you are good company to me. [Nichols 93])

Frederick Goldin writes: "every lyric finds its place in the fixed and universal fiction of courtly love" (1975, 53). The dual focalization present in troubadour lyrics helped to establish that place. The narrator could be completely immersed in the figure of the courtly man in the service of love, placed on the edge of courtly convention in order to regard the refinement and exclusive ideals which distinguished a class and its poetry, or assimilated into a singer who paralleled love and song by demonstrating common inspiration, a search for purity and reasons for giving up singing and loving. Whether used as exclusive perspectives or unified in the voice of the singer, the focalizations of lover and craftsman enabled the troubadour to manipulate conventional material and succeed in satisfying or astonishing his listeners.

Chapter Two: Song as Unity

Prima la musica — dopo le parole? The Relationship of Words and Music

On February seventh, 1786, the court at the Schönbrunn Palace, Vienna, experienced Antonio Salieri's one act operetta, *Prima la musica e poi le parole*. For their title, the composer and his librettist, Abbé Giovanni Battista de Casti, inverted the axiom "prima le parole, dopo la musica" (first the words, then the music) which had been a guiding principle for opera composers since the phrase was coined by Giulio Caccini at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Salieri was articulating an age-old controversy, questioning not only the chronology of composition but the relative importance of the two elements of song — words and music. Throughout history this question has been debated, and no definitive answer has been reached, though many have been proferred. Christoph Gluck gave the primary place to verse, declaring, in the foreward to his opera 'Alceste' of 1769, that the "true purpose" of music is "to support the poetry"; while Mozart, challenging his great rival Salieri, wondered "whether the words of an opera ought to be the obedient daughter of the music" (in Becker 3). The debate is often applied to the songs of the troubadours by modern scholars, both philologists and musicologists. Yet the relative value of words and music was not always a complex, controversial issue. For the comments of the troubadours themselves and the interrelationship of melody and text in their works, attest to a vision in which words and music held equal value and were inextricably bound up in the artform known as song.

The troubadours in general seem not to place any greater importance on either words or music, though occasionally they discuss the order of composition of the two elements. Guiraut de Bornelh remarks: "E.l vers, pos er ben assonatz, / trametrai el viatge" (Kolsen 40.57-59) ("and once my song is put to music I shall send it on its way" [Burgwinkle 20]). It appears completely natural that setting a poem to music should be the final stage of song-writing and one easily assumes that this is a common order of composition. However, Arnaut Daniel tells us that for at least one of his songs, the music was composed before the words: "E cest sonet coind'e leri / fauc motz" (Toja 10.1-2) ("To this light and graceful melody I fashion words" [Press 183]). Bernart de Ventadorn also created songs in this way, for he speaks of "bos motz assire en est so" (Nichols 27.4-6) — placing good words into a melody which he presumably wrote first.

Another situation in which the music comes first is seen in *contrafacto*, the common practice of fitting new words to extant melodies. Marcabru refers to this technique, revealing that he too composed the words of his song after he already had a tune: "Al son desvïat chantaire / veirai si puose un vers faire" (Dejeanne 5.1-2) ("Singing on a borrowed melody I will see if I can make a poem" [Press 55]). Another of Marcabru's songs is set to "an old melody, of ancient meaning" ("Lo vers comença / a son vielh, sen antic" [Dejeanne 32.1-2]). Peter Christian remarks that "the practice of contrafacture by definition requires the chronological priority of the music" (346); but it does not necessarily indicate the superiority of the music over the text. Rather, it could be argued that contrafacture demonstrates an indifference on the part of the troubadour to the melody used for his poem, or a lack of musical, compositional skill. However, in some instances the melody seems to dominate the text, as in the case of Bernart de

Ventadorn's "Can vei la lauzeta mover," for which three melodic versions and five *contrafacta* are preserved with remarkable uniformity. Matthew Steel observes that though the melodies remain true to Bernart's original, the rhyme scheme, sound and poetic metre of the *contrafacta* differ widely. His findings lead him to conclude that "not only can a melody exist quite apart from the influence of a text, but also, certain melodic structures seem to remain inviolate despite manipulations imposed upon them" (263). Instances of patrons commissioning a new set of verses to fit a particularly popular or well-loved tune indicate that the melody was the preferred part of the song; in reverse fashion, it is common today for a choir or soloist to commission a new musical arrangement of a particular text, chosen for its personal significance, relevant meaning or particular eloquence or style. There are rarer instances of new melodies being composed for an existing poem in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries such as the trouvère Roi de Navarre's "Dame, einsi est qu'il mien couvient aler," which has three extant melodies. In these cases the words were obviously first in chronology and in value.

Despite the practice of contrafacture, the words and music of most troubadour songs had the same author, and the same creative inspiration.[1] Pierre Aubry comments that when one poet "wrote words and music together . . . [he] produce[d] the highest and most perfect form of lyrical composition" (8). That the troubadours thought of themselves as both poets and musicians is obvious in their poetry, and their language indicates that they thought of a song as a union of words and music. At least twelve troubadours refer specifically to both the "motz" and "son" (words and melody) of their song, and all use the word "chan" (song), denoting a complete unification of these two aspects. In their poetry, the troubadours often discuss the importance of a balanced relationship of text and music. A frequently quoted axiom, commonly attributed to Folquet de Marseilles, claims, "a verse without music is a mill without water."[2] Folquet was not the only troubadour to emphasize this important union, for an artful combination of text and melody was primary to the formation of lyric songs. Many troubadours, like Sordello, whose "motz leugiers" (easy words) and "guay so" (gay melody) combine to produce a "chanson plazen" (pleasant song) (Boni 4.1-2), describe a juxtaposition of the two elements as central to the art of composition. Peire Vidal advocates this union, saying, "farai chanso tal qu'er leus per aprendre, / de motz cortes et ab avinen chan" (Avalle 19.3-4) ("I will make a song so that it is easy to learn, of courtly words and with a pleasant melody" [Press 213]). Elsewhere Peire boasts of his talent for such composition: "fas meravelhatz / motz ab us sonetz dauratz" (Avalle 4.13-14) ("I can compose marvelous words and golden melodies" [Burgwinkle 228]). In the *tornada* of "De chantar m'era laissatz," he is concerned not only that his poem will be well received by the court at Aragon, but also that they will find the tune "good and light" (Burgwinkle 237):

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[1] Though we have no autographed copies assuring us that, for instance, Bernart de Ventadorn himself wrote the tune we now associate with his "Can vei la lauzeta mover," we must, of course, accept the attributions in the MSS of the extant melodies, as well as the scholarly work confirming such authentications.

> Mas pos vei qu'al bon rei platz,
> farai tost una chanso,

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[2] I reluctantly continue this dubious attribution cited in Aubry (170), Drogus (4), Shapiro (147) and Stevens and Karp (196) without reference — dubious, as I was unable to find the quotation in Stronski's edition of the poems of Folquet de Marseille.

que porte en Arago
Guilhems e'N Blascols Romieus,
s'i.l sos lor par bons e lieus. (Avalle 5.4-8)

While Marcabru proudly claims authorship of the words and melody of "Pax in nomine Domine!" — "fetz Marcabrus los motz e.l so" (Dejeanne 35.1-2) — Jaufre Rudel emphasizes the importance of being skilled in both areas:

No sap chantar qui so non di
ni vers trobar qui motz no fa
ni connoys de rima quo.s va
si razos non enten en si;
pero mos chans comens aissi:
quon plus l'auziretz, mais valra.
(Wolf and Rosenstein 3.1-6)

> (He does not know how to sing who does not say a melody, nor create poems who does not make words, nor does he know of rhyme how it goes if he does not comprehend reasoning within himself; wherefore my song begins thus: as you will hear it more, the more it will be worth. [Pickens 223])

The intervening stanzas of this song are conventional, but Jaufre returns to the double art of composition in his final stanza and tornada:

Bos es lo vers s'ieu no.y falhi,
ni tot so que.y es, be esta. . . . (37-38)

Bos es lo sos, e faran hi
quas que don mos chans gensara. (43-44)

> (Good is the poem for I did not fail in it, and all there is in it goes well. . . . The melody is good, and they will do there whatever things from which my song will grow more noble. [Pickens 225])

The *vidas* and *razos* also describe the composition of both music and poetry; they often praise one aspect of a troubadour's songs while criticizing another. Of Jaufre Rudel, the biographer writes, "fez de leis mains vers ab bons sons, ab paubres motz"

(Boutière and Schutz 17) (he made many songs about [his lady], of good music but with poor words). Peire Vidal is praised for the excellence of his melodies — "e fo aquels que plus rics sons fetz" (Boutière and Schutz 351). While Guiraut de Bornelh was called "maestre dels trobadors" because of "los sieus maestrals ditz de las soas chansos" (Boutière and Schutz 39) (the excellent words of his songs). The troubadours most highly esteemed by their contemporaries and critics were those like Bernart de Ventadorn, who were skilled in both mediums and knew the "art de trobar bos motz e gais sons" (Boutière and Schutz 26) (art of making fine words and gay melodies).

The troubadours' audience unhesitatingly accepted the neccessity of an artistic interlacing of words and music. Yet modern critics are not as ready to praise this aspect of the courtly artform; thus the union of these two halves has become an area of controversy among contemporary musicians and scholars. Even in modern thinking a song, by definition, is a combination of words and music; the title of Mendelssohn's collections of piano pieces known as *Lieder ohne Worte* (Songs Without Words) irrefutably indicates the anomaly: songs usually do possess *both* words *and* music. James Wimsatt and Thomas Cable assert, "in the beginning poetry and music formed one art: Homer was sung, *Beowulf* was sung, the Provençal lyric was sung. Even today they remain united in popular song, in opera and oratorio, and in church liturgy and other kinds of sacred music" (1). The trouble for modern scholars lies not in disagreeing with this definition of song, but in bisecting the *cansos* when they study them, and in attaching significance to only one half of the whole composition. Peter Christian comments that "while everyone is prepared to concede that text and music must, in some sense, have formed a unity, there is no consensus on the exact nature of that unity, and in particular, there is little agreement on the relative importance of text and music" (344).

Among critics of the Provençal tradition there seem to be two main camps: those who believe only in the literary value of the songs, and those who place an equal or even greater importance on the music. One would expect all philologists to hold the former belief and musicologists the latter; but this is not always the case. For instance, Albert Seay is adamant, in his *Music in the Medieval World*, that there is no union of words and music in the songs of the troubadours:

> Most recent research has shown that neither the troubadours nor the trouvères emphasized a particular group of musical forms to accompany their poems. In the minds of both groups, the music occupied a secondary role and served as a vehicle for the text; on the whole, there is little formal unity between the two elements. (65)

This sounds somewhat strange coming from a musicologist, yet many critics, both literary and musical, still adhere to this longstanding view.

Fernandez de la Cuesta notes that "the first people to take an interest in [the works of the troubadours] . . . were, undoubtedly, the philologists. The musicologists came much later" (29). Literary scholarship has used this temporal advantage to exhort the greater importance of troubadour verse, and has succeeded in maintaining this view. As if to make up for their late start, musicologists like Pierre Aubry, after upbraiding previous scholars for failing to present troubadours as musicians and poets, then devote their attention solely to the songs' musical aspects, which is, in Aubry's words, a "just but modest revenge taken by the history of music for a century of oppression carried on by philologians and historians of literature" (4). But by discarding poetic form and content to concentrate on the music, Aubry fails to correct the fault of literary scholars; rather he repeats it in reverse fashion. Robyn E. Smith expresses her concern that in the structural analysis of these songs, "musicologists and philologists have all gone their own way, philologists in particular basing their ideas on the work of previous text scholars, and ignoring the music altogether" (35). Today musical study has culminated in two excellent editions of the complete extant troubadour melodies, one by Fernandez de la Cuesta and another by Hendrik Van der Werf. Yet musicology has failed, even within its own field, to overturn the view propogated by literary scholars, that the music is secondary to the poetry. For example, Hendrik Van der Werf, who has contributed so much to the study of the melodies and their relation to the poems, concludes in his *Chansons of the Troubadours and Trouvères* that the *cansos* are "first and foremost poems to be performed to relatively unobtrusive melodies" (1972, 70).

The first major argument for the predominance of text over melody draws upon the fact that there are two and a half thousand surviving poems, while only ten percent of them have extant music. This, literary specialists strongly assert, indicates a greater interest in words than in music. Yet countering this argument are several persuasive theories which justify the scarcity of extant melodies without detracting from their inherent value. John Stevens, discussing the troubadour and trouvère traditions, points to the surviving melodies themselves as proof of their equal importance:

> it cannot seriously be argued that a generation of patrons/collectors/song-lovers who took the trouble to assemble the huge surviving repertoire of upwards of 1,500 separate melodies . . . could conceivably have thought that the music was not an essential and admirable part of the tradition they were aiming to preserve. The fact is incontrovertible. (41)

As we have discussed earlier, the large number of *contrafacta* also attest to a strong interest in the melodies irrespective of their text.

Instead of indicating a greater importance or value placed on the poems, the paucity of surviving troubadour melodies points, rather, to the method of transmission, which was a mixture of written and oral, but primarily oral dissemination. The first known troubadour songs date from the late eleventh century, before it was popular to record secular music; neumatic notation on a lined staff of church music had been developed only two centuries earlier, and was still not standardized at this time. The difficulty inherent in early musical transcription supported the continuance of oral transmission. A widespread written tradition would have necessitated an abundance of trained music scribes — either musicians who could write, or calligraphers who copied from a written source — as well as people who could read music. Considering the low literacy rate (reading had become fashionable among the nobility, but most literate people were still members of the clergy), it is easy to surmise that those people skilled in the relatively new discipline of reading and writing music were even scarcer, and so "the usefulness of written melodies would be rather restricted, and their rarity thus not surprising" (Christian 346). For the performer, it was so easy to memorize melodies (music being more memorable than text), and so difficult to read melodic notation, that there was little need to record them; thus oral transmission remained entirely acceptable, until, perhaps, someone noticed that troubadour songs were not being sung as often any more, and saw the need to collect them in written form before they were forgotten.

The existence of several manuscripts without music or with blank staves under the text does not necessarily imply a greater interest in words than music, but rather affirms the higher skill level involved in music transcription and the scarcity of scribes. As John Stevens points out, these blank staves "could indicate that sometimes there was a shorter supply of music scribes than of text scribes, or that a musical source was not available at that particular moment, even though the scribe who ruled up the quire expected it would be" (41). Alternately, Jean Beck suggests that the melodies had already been lost at the time of transcription: "on peut admettre que la musique faisait déjà défaut à leurs originaux" (1927, 36). When the oral tradition is taken into consideration, it cannot be construed that a lesser quantity of written melodies indicates a lesser quality or importance.

To the argument of the scarcity of written music, Hendrik Van der Werf adds another element: "the fact that medieval treatises about music rarely discuss the chansons of the troubadours and trouvères, whereas the treatises on poetry discuss the versification of these chansons elaborately but hardly touch upon the melody," he says, corroborates his verdict of the predominance of text over melody (1972, 66). What Van der Werf says about poetic treatises has only a measure of truth. Raimon de Vidal's *Razos de Trobar*, for instance, completely ignores the musical factor, concentrating on a discussion of Provençal grammar. However, in the later *Doctrina de Compondre Dictats*, attributed to Jofre de Foixà, the author, though possessing little musical knowledge and "no conception of the way in which, in certain genres, the musical and metrical structures were related," is still "scrupulous in making some observations on the music of each poetic genre" (Marshall xciv). At least this medieval critic is appreciative of "the fact that this was poetry written for performance and that a consideration of its form involved mention of two complementary elements" — words and music (Marshall xcv). Dante's poetic treatise *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, though later still, speaks about the musically-derived form of the *canzone* and its correspondence to melody. In his observations on poetic theory, Van der Werf fails to consider the remarks on the importance of a union of words and music made by the troubadours themselves, not in literary treatises but in their poems.

As far as musical treatises are concerned, it is true that they rarely discuss the *cansos* of the troubadours. The first important treatment of secular works with vernacular texts is the *Ars Musice* of Johannes de Grocheo (c. 1300), which details the nature of the *Chanson de Geste* and its musical component. The majority of medieval critics of music, including the influential Hucbald, Guido of Arezzo and John "Cotton" or "Afflighem,"[3] were clerics, writing instructional manuals for use in a cathedral or choir school, and thus they drew their examples predominately from church music. But this does not mean that their remarks are inapplicable to secular music. Matthew Steel believes that troubadour melodies stemmed from church musical practice; in a study of Bernart de Ventadorn's "Can vei la lauzeta mover" he states, "the obvious agreement of Bernart's melody with chant style and modal theory . . . suggests a strong connection with chant repertory" (265). It is not foolish to assume a correlation between medieval church music and the troubadour tradition; even if secular melodic formulae were not borrowed directly from plainsong, it is difficult to conceive that the more established and still growing sacred tradition would have had no effect on shaping the form of secular music. Jean Beck points out that many young nobles, as well as future clerics, attended monastic schools at which music was taught as part of the quadrivium. "Cet enseignement," Beck affirms, "à la fois pratique et théorique, était très développé, de sorte que les élèves bien doués devaient en sortir musiciens et compositeurs consommés" (1927, 23). Indeed, the biography of Gosbert de Puycibot, a troubadour of the early thirteenth century, states that he learned his art at the Limousin Abbey of Saint-Leonard; while other *vidas* allude to the monastic education of certain troubadours.

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[3] These two appellations are attributed to the author of the twelfth-century *De Musica* with equal insubstantiability; I have randomly chosen to use "Afflighem" hereafter. See Palisca for a discussion of his name and biography.

It would not be wrong, therefore, to cautiously apply the words of music theoreticians to secular music, and they have much to say about the union of text and melody. For instance, chapters seventeen to twenty of John's *De Musica* first exhort musicians to "exercise our talents in putting to music the rhythms and threnodic verses of the poets" and then lay out the "precepts for composing" such songs according to the syntax, rhyme and vowel structure of poetry. Leo Treitler names this treatise, written around 1100, as "the first explicit writing about the language-music relation in song composition" (7); he also finds the earlier theoretical works by Regino of Prüm (c. 900) and Hermannus Contractus (1025-1050) useful in supporting his observations on the parallel of medieval musical and grammatical syntax. James Wimsatt writes, "because of the close association of music and poetry, medieval theoretical writings about either subject almost inevitably make revelatory statements about the other" (7); indeed, when we remember the complete interchangeability of "vers" and "chan" (poem and song) not only in the old Provençal vocabulary, but also in most early medieval and ancient languages, it would be surprising to find that they do not.

The second major argument for the predominance of text over melody concerns the seemingly superior quality of the poems from a structural and stylistic perspective. This viewpoint is once again articulated by Hendrik Van der Werf:

> Considering the care with which the troubadours and trouvères designed the form of their poems and considering the agreement among the manuscripts regarding rhyme and stanzaic form one would expect the authors, composers and scribes to pay equal attention to detail regarding the musical form. But the manuscripts make it abundantly clear that the form of the poem must have been of far greater interest to everybody involved than the form of the melody. Convention and lack of sophistication in the form of the melody are typical, while originality and attention for detail are exceptional. (Van der Werf 1972, 63)

Van der Werf seems to point here to musical discrepancies between different versions of the melodies found in the various manuscripts as compared to an "agreement among the manuscripts regarding [the] rhyme and stanzaic form" of the poems. Attributing manuscript variations to scribal inattention or authorial indifference again ignores the oral tradition under which the songs were compiled. Six years after making this comment Van der Werf himself engaged in a closer study of the songs' dissemination and concluded that very few discrepancies among multiple versions of melodies were due to scribal sloppiness or disinterest. Rather they were caused by "intentional alteration or improvisation" by the performer (1984, 4). For in the process of transcription, a performance would have been written down by a notator and subsequently copied into the extant manuscripts by a scribe or calligrapher. The resulting musical inconsistencies, which seem great compared to poetic uniformity, do not in any way imply a lack of interest in or importance placed on the melodies relative to the words.

In the above quotation Van der Werf also cites convention and lack of originality as negative factors contributing to the lesser importance of troubadour melodies. Originality may be a measure of evaluation to modern art critics, yet when we consider its general importance to medieval artists, the argument loses its strength. Occasionally the troubadours spoke of finding something new to say in their poetry. In "Chanterai pus vey qu'a far m'ei" Peire d'Alvernhe laments:

> Chanterai pus vey qu'a far m'er
> d'un chant nou que.m gronh dins lo cays;
> chantars m'a tengut en pantays,
> cum si chantes d'aytal guiza
> qu'autruy chantar non ressembles,
> qu'anc chans no fon valens ni bos
> que ressembles autruy chansos. (Del Monte 4.1-7)

> (I'll sing for I see I must write the new song groaning within my jaw; but singing has tormented me — how to sing so that it resembles no one else's song? For no singing is ever worthwhile which resembles that of others [Bonner 73])

Guilhem de Montanhagol echoes this sentiment, saying:

> Qu'estriers non as trobaires bos no fis
> tro fai sos chans quays, nous e gent assis,
> ab noëls digz de nova mäestrïa. (Ricketts 8.8-10)

> (In no other way is a troubadour good or fine, but in making his songs gay, new and nobly fashioned, with new things to say with new art. [Press 266-67])

Yet despite these protestations, there is little to attest that originality was regarded as highly in the Middle Ages as it is today. The theme of love was hardly original to the troubadours, and authors were not overly concerned with discovering new poetic topos or original story lines; Marie de France's *Lais*, Chretien de Troyes' romances and the stories in Boccaccio's *Decameron* often take their plots from classical myths or folk tales, and the hundreds of times a lover looks into his lady's eyes and is pierced by Cupid's arrow in true Ovidian fashion can hardly be called original. Or perhaps Peire's and Guilhem's understanding of "nova" lies in something different from our modern concept of originality. In the Middle Ages, *nova* was subsumed in the concept of *renovatio*, a renewal of tradition which ran "contrary to innovation" (Blodgett 89). In literary genres, this meant a re-working of classical and conventional themes, rather than the creation of unique topos. A troubadour poem was valued not for originating a novel opening stanza, but for its skilled reworking of the conventional nature induction — not for the poet's fresh understanding of the nature of love, but for his ability to correctly manipulate the existing rules of the courtly game. In sacred monophony originality was expressed by taking pre-existing melodic formulae and placing them in new combinations, or by adding melismas, melodic motifs, and even new text to established liturgical chant; these accretions to the liturgy were known as *tropes* and their composers were often called *tropatores* (a Latin name remarkably simliar to the Provençal *trobador*). It was by keeping within the rules of their discipline and drawing upon well-established themes, that medieval musicians and poets were able to demonstrate an innovative talent, as they reworked existing standards of form and content, in their songs.

Van der Werf's main problem with an equality of text and melody seems to reside in his inability to see any unity between the poetic and musical form of the songs. However, it would appear that he is applying double standards to his examination of "versification and melody" (1972, 60). In his *Chansons of the Troubadours and*

Trouvères, Van der Werf discusses the two recognized types of melodic form. The first group consists of those *cansos* which can be defined as AAB (or AB AB X), where A is a unit of two lines (later described by Dante as the *pes*) which is repeated (*frons*), and B is a unit of from three to eight lines (*cauda*); the second group includes all other melodic patterns, which are seen by modern scholars as either variations of the conventional *canso* or, if "there is no repetition neither varied nor literal, of any melodic line," as 'through-composed' (Van der Werf 1972, 64). Similarly, in a discussion of poetic form he differentiates between those poems which conform to a conventional stanzaic structure, following an *ab ab x* rhyme scheme, "with or without variation," and those "chansons that are unique in almost all formal aspects" (60). Remarkably, in poetry these two categories display "an interesting array of originality and conventionality" which attests to "patient careful workmanship" and "skill in versification" (60); whereas the identical differentiation between musical patterns implies a "lack of attention to melodic form" (64). Perhaps not surprisingly, Van der Werf does not see the variations or through-composed melodies as original, seeking to break from the "stereotyped" AAB form (1972, 64); rather he implies that they are haphazard and randomly, if not indifferently, composed. In contrast, Valerie Drogus writes that the through-composed stanza is the most original style of all, "for each line must be unique and at the same time contribute to a pleasing whole as the melody is continuous throughout the stanza" (47). If the 1,575 separate metrical schemes distinguished in Istvan Frank's *Répertoire Métrique*, 1,200 of which are used only once, boast of poetic ingenuity, then surely the unique through-composed melodies, which outnumber the conventional AAB *canso* three to one, present a level of innovation if not equal to, then very close to that implied by the variety of metrical forms. Van der Werf fails to make this logical connection, and after delineating the two categories of poetic and melodic form, he adds to his biased approach by declaring of the *canso*, "one . . . expect[s] the melody for the second *pes* to be a literal repeat of that for the first *pes*" (62). Why should one expect literal melodic rhyme in each *canso* when, as Van der Werf avows, the poems demonstrate a preference for clever diversity in both end and internal rhyme over conventional literalness? And why is "an elusive echo" in the melody a "confusing discrepancy" (64) when a suggested internal word-rhyme is an "ingenious design for unifying" the verse? Van der Werf is clearly imposing a preconceived verdict of the primacy of text on his purportedly objective analysis. He finds the melodies monotonous, overly conventional and unsophisticated because he expects them to be so; and when they display some unique and clever variation, it is to him an unreconcilable inconsistency.

The hasty conclusions of Van der Werf and his like have misled many critics to dismiss too quickly the value of the melodies, without initiating a deeper structural examination. The great creativity in poetic forms occurs in subtle variations of rhyme and metre. From *coblas unissonans*, which possesses the same rhyme-scheme and sounds for each stanza, to the *coblas doblas* and *coblas ternas*, which repeat the same rhyme-scheme but change the sounds every two or three stanzas, to the *sestina*, which repeats the same rhyme-words in a different, calculated order in each stanza, the ingenuity of these forms lies in small but significant deviations from established patterns. Scholars are eager to pay the greatest attention to the tiniest detail of troubadour versification; yet they are either unable or unwilling to notice equally significant details in melodic form — details like internal rhyming of pitches, repetition of melodic motifs, shifts in tessitura and tonality and usage of cadence, intervals and melismas — all of which indicate much more than a passing interest by the troubadour in his music. Just as the originality in rhyme-scheme lies in small deviations from established patterns, so too "sophistication" can be found in the details of melodic form and theme, especially in how attentively it conforms to, and where it diverges from, convention. In Peter Christian's study of Minnesang, he links the formal repetition of the *canso*'s melodic style to the thematic and textual repetition which occurs in the medieval lyric genres. "The common lack of development between one strophe and the next leading to a static rather than a dynamic text, which essentially circles round a subject, rather than developing it, is an intensional mode of functioning," he writes. "Likewise, the limited repertoire of themes and vocabulary endlessly permuted between one strophe and the next, between one song and the next, implies an audience which takes pleasure in the subtle inflection and modulation of a highly restricted set of verbal and thematic elements" (349). Christian believes that the music mirrors this "intensional mode," achieving complexity "by repeatedly modulating a relatively small grouping of elements. . . . Thus strophic repetition need not imply that a genre is musically simple, but merely that any complexity it may have does not derive from extensional elaboration, which its narrow form must necessarily inhibit to a considerable degree" (348).

Only in our attention to the details of verse and melody will we discover how a troubadour's words and music do indeed join together to form a complete song. Peire

Vidal boasts of his skill in joining words and music together in his songs:

> A jostar e lassar
> sai tan gent motz e so,
> que del car ric trobar
> no.m ven hom al talo,
> quant n'ai bona razo. (Avalle 3.1-5)

> (I can put together and interlace words and music with such skill that in the noble art of song no man comes near my heel, when I have a good subject. [Goldin 255]);

while Arnaut Daniel voices a concern that "every word" of his song will "fit well" in the "sweet and pleasing melody":

> En cest sonet coind'e leri
> fauc motz e capuig e doli,
> que serant verai e cert
> qan n'aurai passat la lima. (Toja 4.1-4)

Yet no troubadour explicitly describes how he achieved this union. To discover how words and music fit together requires first of all an examination of form and structure, which involves a metrical analysis, and secondly an exploration of the expressive and mimetic qualities of music and how these are used by the troubadours to evoke the meaning of their songs.

Both poetry and music possess rhythm and metre, two aspects which in the Middle Ages were often regarded as one element. The Venerable Bede's *De Arte Metrica* (c. 700), generally recognized as a starting point for medieval poetics, discusses the similarity of rhythm and metre in vernacular poetry:

> videtur autem rhythmus metris esse consimilis, quae est verborum modulata compositio, non metrica ratione, sed numero syllabarum ad iudicum aurium examinata, ut sunt caramina vulgarium poetarum.

> (It is evident that a "rhythm" is similar to "metres," for it is a patterned

> structure of words without metrical system but deliberately arranged to please the ear through the number of syllables, as are the songs of the vernacular poets. [Stevens 379])

Thomas Cable points out that the same text is quoted by Aurelian of Réôme in the ninth century in his influential treatise, *Musica Disciplina*. Yet Aurelian uses the quotation to define "rhythm" and "metre" in melody. For the medieval composer, then, the same rules of rhythm applied to both poetry and music; in fact rhythm and metre were looked upon as a single aspect, simultaneously the property of the text and the melody. It was imperative therefore that the tune and the lyrics should possess the same rhythm. This was achieved firstly by creating songs which are isosyllabic; that is, for every syllable of text there is one note or note-group, and the rhythm of the spoken word guides the musical metre.[4] Guido of Arezzo praises this correspondence, claiming that "the parallel between verse and chant is no slight one, since neumes correspond to feet and phrases to lines of verse" (Palisca 72). John Afflighem supports the correlation of neumes and syllables; however, he also recommends, "sometimes, too, let one syllable have one or more neumes, and at other times let one neume be divided among more than one syllable," so as to avoid monotony (Palisca 71). In the troubadour manuscripts, the songs are written synoptically, with the lyrics directly underneath or above the melodic stave, so that the correspondence of neume and text is clearly visible.

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[4] The majority of songs in the MSS are written in a non-mensural notation, and though early scholars attempted to apply *musica metrica* — sounds measured in longs and shorts, grouped in feet, and generally associated with early polyphony and rhythmic modes — to troubadour melodies, it is now agreed that the songs cannot be interpreted in that manner. De la Cuesta affirms that "the music as well as the text . . . is left warped and maimed when submitted to the artifice of rhythmical modes" (31). For a more detailed defense of isosyllabic interpretation see Stevens 494-96 or Van der Werf 1984, 11-13.

In addition to individual syllables, there is often a correlation between the poetic line, ending in a rhyme-word and/or a syntactical pause, and the musical phrase, ending with a cadence or semi-cadence, indicating a resting or turning point in the melody. John Afflighem suggests that "the best plan for ordering melody is this: for the chant to have a pause on its final where the sense of the words calls for a punctuation mark" (Palisca 61). In the manuscripts there are no notated indications of a *ritardando* or pause at the end of a line or sentence; however, a cadence, especially a cadence to the final (the equivalent of the modern tonic), leads a singer to pause or rest naturally on that note. John's rule calls for text and melody to observe punctuation marks; but often a line's rhyme-end is characterized by a noticeable closure of a melodic phrase, even when there is no punctuation mark. This echoes Guido's preference to "let the subdivisions and phrases of both neumes and the words end at the same time" (72).

The close correspondence between poetic line and melodic phrase can be discerned most easily in the common AAB melodic form. In this style of *canso*, the melody nearly always contains precisely the same number of notes or note-groups as the poem has syllables, and there is most often a cadence, or semi-cadence at the end of each musical phrase which corresponds to the rhyme and syntactical or speech-phrase pause at the end of a line of text. In addition the structure of *frons* and *cauda* is emphasised by a punctuation mark dividing a stanza into two parts at the strongest point of musical division. The division may be further characterized by having the *cauda* begin in a higher tessitura than the *frons*, often accompanied by a shift in tonality, before returning after a few lines to the original tessitura and tonal centre. Moreover, the troubadour may choose a poetic rhyme-scheme which literally imitates the repetition of the melodic form. Jaufre Rudel's "Lanquan li jorn son lonc en may" perfectly illustrates the conventional *canso* form, as it conforms to each of the practices described above. The melodic form of AB AB ACB is matched by a poetic rhyme-scheme of *ab ab ccd*, and the cadences reflect a definite tonal shift in the fifth line — dc dc gdc — which is reinforced by a period occurring at the end of the fourth line in each stanza. Jaufre's three other extant melodies are also composed in the *canso* style; however, they do not conform to every convention as closely as "Lanquan li jorn."

In ninety-five instances where troubadours employ the AB AB X style of *canso*, their poetic rhyme schemes also display a tripartite arrangement, fifty-three copying the *ab ab x* rhyme and twenty-four using an inverted *ab ba x* variation.[5] Bernart de Ventadorn was rather fond of this convention, for of his nineteen extant melodies, eight display the AB AB X form, and seven of these have corresponding rhyme schemes where the first two end rhymes are repeated (*ab ab*) (in one case inverted), and the last four are varied. Thirty of Guiraut Riquier's forty-eight songs which survive with melodies conform to the conventional *canso* form, twenty-three possessing corresponding rhyme-schemes. It is easy to see how the words and music fit together, where the rhyme-form so closely imitates the melodic form: it also leads one to suspect that in these instances the music may have dictated the poetic structure. Friedrich Gennrich believes that a *canso*'s melody is the decisive factor for determining form (in Switten 246); indeed,

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[5] These figures are based on I.F. de la Cuesta's edition and melodic analysis of 278 troubadour melodies.

Dante defines the *canzone* as "sub certo cantu et habitudine limitata carminum et sillabarum compagem" (ix.27-8) (a combination of verse and syllables corresponding to a certain melody and a prescribed arrangement [Welliver 117]), and discusses "quomodo cantionis ars circa cantus divisionem consistat" (x.33-34) (in what way the art of the *canzone* is based on the melodic division [119]). But whether or not the musical structure anticipated the poetic form, it certainly contributes greatly to the song as a whole; here text and music work together, each contributing to the overall effect of the song.

Bernart de Ventadorn's "Ab joi mou lo vers e.l comens"[6] adheres to the more conventional form of the *canso*. It uses a *coblas unissonas* rhyme-scheme and a fairly simple metre which echoes the changing end-rhymes as follows:

a	*b*	*b*	*a*	*c*	*c*	*d*	*d*
8	8	8	8	7'	7'	10	10
A	B	A^2	B^2	C	D	E	F

The division between lines four and five is emphasized in a number of ways. Bernart employs the common technique of shifting to a higher tessitura at the beginning of the song's second half: line five begins on and revolves around *a* while the first half centred on *f*. Bernart's play on the words "beginning" and "end" in the first stanza also enforces a bipartite structure. In the first half of the stanza he echoes the rhyme scheme, placing both "ends" inside two "beginnings": lines one to four finish with "comens," "fenis," "fis," and "comensamens" respectively. Bernart encloses the second half with a beginning and end in their proper order, placing "comensansa" in the fifth line and

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[6] The complete melody and text of songs which are discussed in detail can be found in the appendix.

"fenir" in the eighth. Besides reinforcing the structure, the end-words of the first stanza sum up the sense behind the entire song. In "comens," "fenis," "fis," "comensamens," "comensansa," "alegransa," "grazir," and "fenir" we see outlined a preoccupation with the joyful delight of embarking on a new love-adventure and the expected reward at the end of the game. Stephen Nichols observes that the meter also contributes to the poem's meaning:

> by associating *comensansa-alegransa* in the first couplet of the second quatrain and by making these two lines the shortest, Bernart conveys through rhyme and metrics alone the idea of the quick, joyous beginning expressed by the total content of the couplet. The same technique is used in the last couplet of the stanza which is stretched out to ten-syllable lines more suitable to the moral aphorism with which the poet closes. In this one stanza, he has not only *stated* his creative joy, he has *demonstrated* it rhythmically and metrically. (18)

In typical troubadour fashion, "Ab joi mou lo vers" begins each line with single neumes balancing each syllable, and reserves neumatic groups for the second half of the line. The first quatrain begins with stepwise motion for the first three notes of each line, drawing attention to these four "comensamens" which are identical in MS R and nearly so in MSS W and G. The song shows more variety in the second quatrain, growing increasingly melismatic as it nears the end, perhaps in imitation of the poet-lover's anticipation of the generous reward which accompanies good endings. The sense of jubilant expectation increases as we reach the largest single melisma of the song which, fittingly, occurs on the word "alegransa" (happiness) in the sixth line. The climactic point in terms of pitch comes in line seven, reaching a *c* on "bo*na* fin gra*zir*," as the poet welcomes the good ending with growing impatience. This increasing movement is hastened by the quick descent from the climax, and the leap of a fifth between lines seven and eight. Instead of resting on a cadence point, line seven ends on a *g*, the note directly above the final; this does not allow the melody to pause, but rather, pushes it through to the finishing line. The insistence of this melodic gesture is imitated in the text of the first stanza as there is no speech pause between lines seven and eight — "e per so dei la bona fi grazir / car totz bos faihz vei lauzar al fenir." In "Ab joi mou lo vers e.l comens," melodic and poetic structure combine to reinforce the predominant sense of the song, aided by the specific themes reflected in the text of the first stanza. The overall form suggests a dual emphasis on the joy of love newly begun and the anticipation of love's rewards — the overall theme of the song.

The popular *canso* form exemplifies a unique literal correspondence of poetry and melody; yet this is not the only form in which words and music combine to create a unified structure. Valerie Drogus rightfully declares that "lack of [literal] repetition in a through-composed melody should not preclude the possibility that there is a definite relationship between the melodic and metrical structure of the stanza" (49). Rather, it is in those variations or through-composed forms where the melody does not literally correspond with the verse form that the troubadours display subtler techniques for unifying words and music. Drogus suggests that unity is often found in complementary rather than corresponding structure or form; for instance, "a through-composed stanza may be used to balance a repetitious rhyme scheme, or a repetitive melody may unify an erratic rhyme" (48).

An examination of another love-song of Bernart de Ventadorn — this time one which does not display the conventional *frons* and *cauda* form — may illustrate original techniques for unifying words and music. The *coblas unissonas* rhyme-scheme of "A! Tantas bonas chansos" resembles the form of the *canso*, with added repetition. The *abba cddc* form divides an eight-line stanza into two tightly enclosed sections which imitate each other in form but not in rhyme-sound. This near repetition is reinforced by the metre; the first quatrain is comprised of seven-syllable lines whereas an unstressed feminine rhyme is added to each seven-syllable line of the second quatrain, and thus the stanza is divided into two halves which closely resemble each other. To his verse, Bernart has matched a melody which exists for us in only one manuscript (MS R). Though it is through-composed (de la Cuesta defines the melodic form as ABCDEFGD), there is a great deal of repetition which unifies the melody and binds it to the poetic structure, creating an integrated whole with a discernible form. To discover all the intricacies of this rich musical rhyme it is necessary to examine the melody line by line.

Line one opens the song emphatically, as does the exclamatory first line of text. Beginning on the second highest pitch of the song (*c*) the melodic line descends to a *g* by the fourth syllable, then turns upward on the next two note-groups, returning to a *g* on the seventh syllable. Line two begins a third lower than line one did, on *a*, one step above the final note of line one; it too descends (though with a few more turns than line one) resting at the fourth syllable on a *d*, the lowest pitch of the song, and then turns and echoes the movement of line one, a fourth lower in pitch. The third line begins on a *d* and rises to a cadence on *a* — an inversion of the progress made by line two. However, line three adds one note (*b*) to the range of the second line. The fourth line returns to the pattern set by line one, moving from *c* to *g*, albeit more melismatically; but this time two notes — a high *d* (the highest pitch of the song), and an *f* — are added, one on either side of the range established in the first line.

Line five brings us to the second half of the song. It jumps back up to a *c* to begin the line, the leap of a fourth creating a dramatic break between the two melodic sections. The first three notes of the fifth line literally repeat the opening melodic motif, teasing the listener to expect a new stanza, and giving the impression of a fresh start to the second half. With the fourth note, line five jumps a third, up to *c*, climbs to *d* (the climax of the song) and then dramatically drops down a fifth, ending with a melisma which comes to rest on *f*. The effect of this flamboyant line is to emphasise the strongest emotion of the first stanza — the great harshness ("tan dura") of the lady, which her lover has nobly endured.

Line six is the only line to first rise (from *f* to *b*, where the fourth note is once again a turning point) only to fall lower than it began (the cadence rests on *e*). This despairing movement captures the hopeless failure of the lover who, unwisely putting his trust in too cold a lady, had boldly striven ahead only to be ingraciously turned back, and now realizes that he has lost the game of love — "aras sai qu'e.us ai perduda." Like the connection between the first two lines, there are some subtle echoes of line five in line six. It begins as an inversion of line five, approaching the third note, *a*, by stepwise motion from below, while line five moved by step from above to *a* on the third note. After this ascension is turned back on itself, however, the notes are again reminiscent of line five: both move from a *g* on the sixth note through a turn (in line five around *a*, and six around *g*) to two joined neumes (*g-f* in line five, *f-e* in six).

The seventh line is the mirror image of line six, repeating the inversion found in lines two and three. Starting on the same note which began line six (*f*), the melody descends to a *d*, and turns on the fourth note, climbing to a melisma on the seventh note, around *g*, and finshes with two joined neumes, resting on *a*. Though this causes the inversion to end two pitches higher than it began (the original ended only one pitch lower), it avoids a large leap to the eighth line which would detract from the previous drama of line five. Also in the seventh line, the largest melisma of the song has been paired in the first stanza with the most physically active verb of the song — "tolguda" (taken away). Line eight is an exact copy of line four, with the exception of an added melisma on the seventh note and the extra note to accommodate the feminine rhyme. The opening note of the line (*c*) and the gradual descent suggest a return to line five, while the literal repetition unifies the two halves of the song.

If we attempt now to design a schematic of the melodic form, it might look something like this: $A\ B\ B^{inv}\ C^{A}\quad D^{A}\ E\ E^{inv}\ C^{D}$ — not so alienated after all from the rhyme-scheme *abba cddc*. Through musical rhyme and echo the through-composed melody of "A! Tantas bonas chansos" achieves a peculiar uniformity, intricately woven of repeated and varied melodic motifs, which shares a similar structure to the poetic rhyme-scheme and balances the overall sentiment of the song as introduced in the first stanza.

It is not only in the works of Bernart de Ventadorn that a through-composed melody may disguise the hidden intricacies of a song's structural balance. Margaret Switten comes to a similar conclusion in her study of Peirol's songs. She quickly dismisses seven songs in which a poetic rhyme-scheme of *ab ab x* corresponds to a melodic AB AB CDEF form. In these songs, she declares, "the agreement between poetry and music is plain" (1960, 247); it is in the remaining ten songs that her chief interest lies. Each one of these, she states, "embodies a different and instructive union of poetic and musical forms" (247-48). By taking a close look at poetic metre, melodic cadences, and musical divisions suggested by use of repeated melodic units, Switten is able to show that "the meter and music [still] go hand in hand" in through-composed or variant songs (253).

For example, at first glance, "Nuills hom no s'auci tan gen," with its through-composed melody, seemingly tripartite *aabaabaa* rhyme scheme, and combination of seven- and five-syllable lines, makes for an awkward arrangement indeed. However, the symmetry of its cadences divides the song in half, and reveals "the fact that the second part of the stanza is literally the first part backwards" (Switten 1960, 250):

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
sol	fa	sol	do	sol	fa	sol	do
a	*a*	*b*	*a*	*a*	*b*	*a*	*a*
7	5	7'	7	7	7'	5	7

The bipartite division is reinforced by a stepwise octave descent which occurs in the fourth line, and the first stanza which is divided into two sentences of four lines each. The music in this song is again crucial to determining the verse structure. By looking at melodic structure in relation to poetic metre and rhyme-scheme, Switten concludes that all "the works of Peirol must be understood as a whole to which both melody and verse contribute full measure" (253):

> To clarity of structural outline and richness of detail must be added an

> underlying unity which distinguishes Peirol's works. Meter and melody are essentially complementary: formal structure is more fully defined by both together than by either taken separately. (255)

Another example of how a through-composed melody perfectly fits the poetic structure is found in Arnaut Daniel's *sestina*, "Lo ferm voler q'el cor m'intra." The poetic key of the *sestina* is the displacement of rhyme-words from one stanza to the next in an elaborate, pre-established pattern. The interwoven rhyme-words form a peculiar circularity, connected by the rhyme-word of one stanza's final line being used in the first line of the following stanza. The circle is made complete when the very first rhyme-word of the poem is used as the final rhyme-word in the sixth stanza and *tornada*. Arnaut's through-composed melody complements this intricate pattern by maintaining a very smooth melodic line, connected by predominantly stepwise motion and with no overly ornamental melismas to hinder the complex verse. At the same time it reinforces the symbolic quality of the circle as an image of the divine: the final cadences of each melodic line — sol, sol, fa, fa, do, do — divide the melody into three groups of two lines each (three of course being a significant number indicative of the triune Godhead); lines three and four are further set apart by a slightly higher tessitura than the other lines, as well as a different tonal centre, established in line three by containing the melody between *f* and *c*, with repeated use of *b♭*. This tripartite division emphasises the circle's representation of the divine order of the universe, yet it does not disrupt the fluidity of the melodic line, for each new line begins just one step away from the preceding cadence-note, avoiding any strong leaps which might break the circular flow of the music. In Arnaut Daniel's *sestina* the verse and music work together to represent the perfect symmetry of a circle or, as Margaret Switten claims, a Pythagorean and Boethian concept of the "composition de l'âme du monde" (1991, 550).

More and more scholars are acknowledging a relationship between the poetic metre, rhyme-scheme and melodic structure of troubadour songs. Yet metrical structure may be just the beginning of a deeper correspondence between words and music. In his article, "The Troubadours Singing Their Poems," Leo Treitler examines how "melody interprets language, through its reflection of the organization of verse and syntax, and its response to semantic and poetic nuance" (20). What Treitler calls "melodic syntax" goes beyond rhythm and rhyme and is deeply entrenched in the semantics of a song. It is more difficult to explore the relationship of expressive and mimetic qualitites of music and how they are used to reinforce the sense of the texts than to expose structural unity. Yet we know that music is concerned with expression, and therefore with meaning; so it is logical to assume that the troubadours desired their music to express the meaning of their songs. Guillaume IX ranks the value of accessible meaning along with poetic and musical excellence in his songs:

> Del vers vos dig que mais en vau,
> qui be l'enten, e n'a plus lau,
> que.l mot son fag tug per egau
> cominalmens,
> e.l sonetz, qu'ieu mezeis m'en lau,
> bos e valens. (Jeanroy 7.37-42)

> (Of this poem I tell you that it's worth more if one understands it well, and it receives more praise; for the words are wrought all of one style, and the melody, which I praise myself for, is good and fine [Press 21]);

while Guiraut de Bornelh speaks of preserving the meaning of his *vers* — "qui sap razo garder" (Kolsen 4.19-21) — within a well-formed song.

The most famous of Bernart de Ventadorn's *cansos* is caught in the midst of the controversy between those who believe in the expressive qualities of music and those who do not. The melody of "Can vei la lauzeta mover" is regarded as no less beautiful today than it was in the Middle Ages, when the popularity of its poignant lyricism resulted in at least five *contrafacta* being made to it. Even today, performers of early music use Bernart's tune with other troubadours' poetry: Jöel Cohen justifies the use of "Can vei la lauzeta"'s melody with Guiraut Riquier's poem, "Be.m degra de chantar tener," by commenting: "the extraordinarily close fit between poem and melody leads us to believe that Riquier's poem was intended to be sung to Ventadorn's music" (Cohen 53).

In the first half of the strophe, the melody rises gracefully, turning and dipping until it reaches an octave above its starting note at the beginning of the third line. It then descends with the same gentle rolls and curves. Its elegant, sweeping progression is altogther suggestive of the flight and fall of a lark. The second half begins a fifth higher in MSS W and G, a third higher in MS R, coinciding with the emphatic, "Ai," of line five's opening text; at the end of the phrase in all three versions there is a downward leap of a fifth — the strongest melodic gesture in the song — emphasizing the strongest feeling, envy. The tessitura of lines six to eight grows successively lower, coinciding with a feeling of depression expressed in the text of the first stanza. "Can vei la lauzeta mover" is clearly an example of a melody where poetic image and emotion is translated into musical syntax. Bernart brings the expressive qualities of the music to the fore in this remarkable song.

While many medievalists acknowledge some unity in poetic and melodic form and structure, they are not prepared to admit a mimetic relationship, that is, a matching of music and language directly at the semantic level. Such mimesis is evidenced in later Renaissance vocal music, and was extremely popular in the Baroque and Romantic periods (compare, for instance, Bach's thunder and lightning chorale, "Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken verschwunden?" or the Evangelist's recitative which occurs at the dramatic tearing of the veil of the temple in his St. Matthew Passion, or Stanford's beautifully evocative setting of Mary Coleridge's "The Blue Bird"). But examples of obvious word-painting in medieval songs are disturbing to scholars who have been grounded in the Augustinian view that music is primarily related to mathematics and consequently is less interested in expressive dimensions. John Stevens voices the feelings of many critics when he says:

> When words and music come together they have to agree, certainly, but this agreement is primarily a matter of parallel "harmonies," agreements of phrase and structure, of balance and "number". . . . Such a view does not exclude from the effects of music emotional experiences of great power (romantic or mystical or any other); indeed it is often invoked to explain them. It does, however, seem to exclude — or at least, patently and consistently neglects — the close and detailed expressive relations between words and music which we find in the songs of later periods. For this reason a theory of expressive sound closely related to subject-matter, a theory apparently derived from antique rhetoric, has only a limited place in "the medieval experience of music." It remains marginal and never finds a comfortable place in the Great Synthesis. (Stevens 409)

A common point against musical mimesis argues that in most cases the supposed word-painting is specific to the first stanza only, and text stress, which may appear important in verse one, does not hold true for the entire song. Stevens observes that in an AAB *canso* "it is rare to find within a single stanza the precisely repeated pattern of verbal accent which would enable the melodies of lines one and two to be used sensitively for lines three and four" (46). It is not uncommon to find a dramatic leap, high note or melisma, which appears mimetic in the first stanza, resting on an inconsequential article or pronoun such as "lo" or "que" in subsequent verses. Van der Werf notes that "groups of pitches come as often on accented as on unaccented syllables" and derives from this that "the meaning of a word or its importance in the sentence is not reflected in the contour of the music" (1984, 62). While in these instances musical mimesis cannot be argued to exist throughout the piece, one is not bound to dismiss their existence in the first stanza as coincidental and discard their importance to the meaning of the entire song.

Leo Treitler proffers a theory which justifies isolated cases of musical mimesis. He agrees that sometimes, as in the case of "Can vei la lauzeta mover," a melody fits only the first stanza and subsequent stanzas display an absence of close correspondence between the text and the melody. Yet instead of leading one to dismiss all correspondence, Treitler reasons that

> the alternative understanding is that the composer invents a melody that is appropriate to the initial stanza, and once invented the melody continues as an autonomous vehicle for the subsequent stanzas. The listener would judge the melody's appropriateness to the poem in the initial encounter, that is, with the first stanza. (26)

As helpful as this theory may be to substantiate the mimetic correspondence between the first verse of "Can vei la lauzeta" and its tune, it is somewhat lacking in respect for the entire song. Imagine the deflated feeling of the audience, after they have judged the quality of the song in one excellent stanza where words and music are impeccably matched, knowing they then have to sit through six, eight or ten more verses which may or may not fit the music, thereby destroying the unity of the song as a whole.

Much more profitable is a view which incorporates the mimetic quality of the first stanza as a factor that does not in itself embody the value of the song, but contributes, along with poetic form and musical structure and expression, to the understanding and enjoyment of the entire song. As we have determined in "Ab joi mou lo vers e.l comens," the inital stanza is a crucial factor in shaping the overall sense of the song. In this *canso*, the melody's expressive and mimetic qualities specifically emphasise the rhyming end-words of the first stanza and imitate their arrangement; this in turn elucidates the overall theme of the song, which has been summarized in the text of the first stanza and is expressed generally in the form and structure of the melody.

If one looks again at "Can vei la lauzeta mover," there is no doubt that the melody is mimetically linked to the images and emotions of the first stanza, especially the image of the lark. But the first stanza is integral to an understanding of the entire song. The lark represents, after all, the turning emotions of the lover. The rising and falling movement of the first quatrain, followed by the drama of line five and a reconciliatory descent to line eight, evokes the sense of a courtly lover who continues to "climb too high" (trop puyei contra mon [40]) and is turned away disappointed — a theme which is captured in not only the first, but every stanza of the song.

Despite modern scholarship's recognition of only two melodic forms, there are some melodies which do not fall comfortably into either the *canso* or the through-composed mould. One of these is Bernart de Ventadorn's "Lancan vei la folha," a song which possesses one of the most hauntingly beautiful melodies in the troubadour repertoire. De la Cuesta calls the form "Cançon amb volta" — a *canso* with a difference; for while the melody can be described in terms of an AAB pattern, each *pes* is comprised of four lines instead of two, and the *cauda* repeats material from the *pedes*: ABCD ABCD EFCD.

To this tertiary structure, Bernart mates an unusually simple and repetitive poetic rhyme-scheme and metre, considering the number of his poems which display much more virtuosity and finesse in a variety of forms. The rhyme and metre add a dualistic nature to the tripartite melody, for each is comprised of only two alternating units: *a* and *b* rhyme-words, coupled with five- plus an unstressed and six-syllable lines respectively, are alternated through the twelve-line stanza, their consistency broken only by the introduction of new rhyme-sounds with each new stanza. It appears to be up to the melody to inject some diversity into the so-far monotonous structure; but upon closer inspection we find that it too is drenched in repetition.

The fourth and eighth melodic lines (D) echo the second and sixth (B). Except for an extra *b* in lines 2 and 6, the same pitches occur in almost exactly the same order in both lines: the *b-c-b-a* progression which begins line B is compacted in the second and third syllables of line D, whereas B's *a-g-f-g* grouping on syllables four and five is spread out over D's fourth to sixth syllables. The *a* which ends line B is displaced to the beginning of line D. In addition, line ten (F) contains a similar pattern to lines four and eight (D): the first three notes of F, *a-b-a*, are identical to the pitches of the first three syllables of D, lacking only the turn on *b*, which is present in D. The last three syllables of F present the same grouping of two descending neighbour-notes on one syllable, followed by two ascending neighbour-notes on the final two syllables; only in line 10 (F) the first group is one pitch lower than in four and eight (D), while the next two notes are one pitch higher. In fact, these four pitches literally repeat the four final pitches of line B. The final line is, of course, a slightly more melismatic version of lines four and eight, and therefore is also related to lines two and six.

With these repetitions now delineated, we may reconfigure the melodic stanza something like this:

A B C B^1 A B C B^1 E B^2 C B^3
(A B C D A B C D E F C D)

The melodic pattern is beginning to lose its tertiary feel and look suspiciously like the rhyme- and metrical schemes. However we can now easily discern that line 9 (E) offers the sole respite from repetition — at once a haven and a storm. Line nine interrupts the alternating continuity of the stanzaic form by first of all disturbing the tonality of the music; the tonal centre which had previously alternated between *g* and *f* (with cadences on *c*, *a*, *f* and *g*) is in line nine raised to *b*, along with an elevated tessitura. The melodic climax occurs here as the second note stretches to a high *d*. There is also a greater sense of movement through the line, as its six-note melisma (the longest melisma in the song) finishes on an *a*, the subfinal in this new tonality, which inherently requires immediate movement to the final. This progression occurs in the first two notes of line ten, but the melody then quickly descends to its former tessitura and the brief immediacy of line nine dissolves into the previous tonality and the persistent plodding of the ABCB form. The break in melodic form afforded by the ninth line is echoed in the text; for in every stanza line eight finishes with a punctuation mark — a period in stanzas I through VI, and a comma, followed by a change of subject (edited as a semi-colon by Stephen Nichols) in VII. This creates a distinct separation of the final quatrain from the first section of the poem, while literal melodic repetition succeeds in merging the first two quatrains into one continuous *frons*.

More than just echoing the poetic structure, the melody of "Lancan vei la folha" complements the sense of the text; in fact, the semantics of the song is bound up as much in its form and structure as in the actual individual meanings of its words. The poem describes the fate of a lover who is lost in the grief and despair of unrequited love. He can move only between the intense experience of his own pain and reflection upon the cruelty of his lady. The duality of his situation is perfectly captured in the centre of the poem's text where the image of the mirror occurs exactly halfway through Stanza IV. This "mirador," synonomous with "la belazor" (the beautiful lady), at once reveals the source of his pain and reflects his tormented self.

Yet in each stanza a glimmer of hope is afforded to the lover, before it is crushed by the depth of his suffering. This hope parallels the surge of immediacy and almost violent struggle to rise which instantly disturbs line nine (E) of the melody, and is as quickly quelled. In stanza III the lover's hope is disguised as the "semblansa" of singing; in II and VI it is a plea to God to release him from his misery through changing his lady's mind, or through death; in the first stanza the poet resolves, if only for an instant, to leave his mistress — "cor ai que m'en tolha"; in V he promises not to tell anyone if she should show him one kind act; in IV hope takes the form of a vow to "kill whoever contrived the mirror"; and in VII thoughts of his lady, lodged in his loyal heart, are themselves his succour. These images create a brief respite from the panoply of cruelty and despair which shrouds the rest of the poem. Just as the song's structure is alternately divided into two closely related portions with one unique moment of variation, so the theme of the song is tossed between a lady's cruelty and a lover's despair, with only an occasional, brief glimpse of hope for a relief from this situation.

John Stevens observes that "the historical study of words and music is bound to show, if nothing else, how manifold the possible relationships are between the two" (26). An understanding of this relationship in troubadour songs depends not so much on the artist's attention to the details of text and melody, but on our own willingness to investigate these details and trace their integration. Just as a visitor to the Musée de Cluny in Paris, after viewing a myriad of medieval paintings, might, from a distance, unsuspectingly mistake "La Dame et la Licorne" for merely another interesting, but conventional painting, too many scholars have passed by the music of the troubadours after viewing the more accessible (to twentieth-century minds) poetry. But they have sadly missed out on a rare and exquisite art form. When one looks only at the obvious, one sees only familiar convention. When one looks closely and attentively at detail, one sees that the 'common' picture is in fact a rich tapestry of interwoven colours and textures which react with and upon one another to create a unique and complex work of art. When at their best, a troubadour's words and music work together; one art uplifts the other to express the full meaning of the song.

"Prima la musica, dopo le parole?" — perhaps this question was answered best by Richard Strauss and Clemens Krauss in their opera, *Capriccio*, not by deciding in favour of either one side or the other, but by leaving it unanswered. In the unresolved ending of the opera, the heroine, Countess Madeleine, discovers the truth of their relationship:

> Den Schluss der Oper soll ich bestimmen, soll wählen — entscheiden? Sind es die Worte, die mein Herz bewegen, oder sind es die Töne, die stärker sprechen. . . .
>
> Vergebliches Müh'n, die beiden zu trennen. In eins verschmolzen sind Worte und Töne — zu einem Neuen verbunden. Geheimnis der Stunde — Eine Kunst durch die andere erlöst!
>
> (The opera is ending — I am to tell them the final decision? Whether the verses move my heart more deeply, or whether it is the music that has more power? . . . In vain do I try to keep them apart, for words and music are blended together to form a single creation. Mysterious experience — finding one art restored by the other. [Becker 12])

Chapter Three: Song as Sound

Orality and Performance for Medieval and Modern Times

So far we have been content to study the troubadour songs as written phenomena, preserved for us in manuscript form. We have analysed their vocabulary, poetic devices, melodic structure and syntax, and have explored a relationship of text and music clearly discernible in their configuration. Yet there is much more to a song than its written record. The melodic notations found in medieval manuscripts are merely sets of graphic symbols; whereas the true essence of song must include its presentation and interpretation: the real music lies not in the record but in the actual sounds which have been transcribed. There is as much distinction between the notation of sound and language and the sounds themselves as there is between the blueprint of a building and the actual structure. Only in an oral performance can one experience a song as it was intended by the troubadours — as an expressive vocal realisation of language and music.

Even to our twentieth-century minds song connotes first of all sound; we think of crooning pop stars, warbling birds, an ill-rendered tune heard through shower doors, or children's lilting taunts and games in the play-ground. All of these are songs, and despite their diversity, possess two common elements: the manifestation of vocal sound, and the action of singing. Music and sound are easily associated in our minds; but in spite of the continuance of lectures and poetry readings, television and radio, in our highly literate society language is not as immediately associated with sound. Southern Provence of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was not so far removed from a pre-literate culture as we are today, and they were not hampered by a dominating alliance of language and writing. Orality did not expire as literacy gained popularity; rather, as Leo Treitler explains, the literate practices established in the Middle Ages "were superimposed on the continuation of a complex and variegated [oral] situation" (1986, 38). Methods of oral composition and transmission were being continued in musical and literary practice simultaneously with the development of written channels. The dominance of literary concepts was first felt in poetry, so that by the fourteenth century poets were composing verses which were written down upon their conception and intended to be read as much as spoken. For music, however, the "transition from writing down an oral tradition into writing down music which is already conceived with notation in mind" did not take place until the end of the Middle Ages (Treitler 1986, 55).

The troubadours lived and worked in this transitional time; yet their works are clearly the products of oral tradition. Not only were these songs transmitted through singing, but also it is highly likely that they were composed without the aid of writing. The troubadours never speak of 'writing' a poem or song, but always of 'composing' it, using various forms of the verbs "trobar" and "far" to express the act of composition. Neither verb connotes a creational process involving ink and parchment, but both imply a sense of spontaneous improvisation — *trobar* literally meaning "to find,"[1] and *far* with its dual translation as "to make" or "to do." Though most often translated as "make," *fetz* draws more attention to the performance and sound of the troubadour songs when its second meaning, "do," is considered. Gerald Bond attributes connotations of performance to the verb *far* as he invariably translates it as "do." Bond attests that the troubadours did not use *far* and *trobar* interchangeably, but made a clear distinction between the two. For example, when Guillaume IX uses both verbs in the same stanza, there is a definite temporal contrast attached to the two actions:

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[1] None of the presently formulated hypotheses have definitively resolved the enigma surrounding the origin of troubadour poetry, their name and the word, *trobar*. Though there are several intriguing approaches — including the possible connection to Hispano-Arabic poetry which maintains that *trobar* is a corruption of an Arabic term — I prefer to subscribe to the theory that *trobar* is a Provençal equivalent of classical Latin *invenire* (to discover, invent or devise), derived through vulgar Latin *tropare* from low Latin *contropare* (to compare) and cognate with Greek and classical Latin *tropos* (to say with tropes). For an interesting discussion of this linguistic transformation see L. Spitzer or Pierre Guiraud. However the word came to be in the Old Provençal lexicon, it is nearly always glossed first as "to find," as in "S'ieu trobes

> Farai un vers de dreyt nïen:
> non er de mi ni d'autra gen,
> non er d'amor ni de joven,
> ni de ren au,
> qu'enans fo trobatz en durmen
> sobre un chevau. (Jeanroy 4.1-6)

> (I'll do a song about nothing at all: it won't be about me nor about others, it won't be about love nor about happiness nor about anything else, for it was composed earlier while [I was] sleeping on a horse. [Bond 15])

Because composition is explicitly defined as a previous stage, the first verb, *farai*, acquires an immediacy which suggests a stanzaic interpretation of, "I shall now present or perform a song . . . which was composed earlier." *Farai* in this context denotes a physical birth of the song, while *trobatz* suggests a mental conception (in Guillaume IX's specific case, an unconscious one!).

The creation of a song is infused with orality; yet it is not without rules or requisite skilled craftmanship. The verb *trobar* is reserved for human description, thereby

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dona benestan" ("if I find the perfect lady," Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, Hamlin and Ricketts 185), and then as "to compose courtly songs" — "art de trobar bos motz e gais sons" ("the art of composing fine words and pleasing melodies," *Vida* of Bernart de Ventadorn, Boutière and Schutz 26-7).

removing the artform from the complete instinctiveness and spontaneity which characterizes bird-song. Birds in medieval poetry never *trobatz* or *farai*, but rather, they begin or move — *mou* or *movon* — their songs (though this is sometimes translated as "compose"[2]). The popular nature induction often parallels a bird's instinctive singing with the lover's song springing artlessly from love's inspiration. This illusion of instantaneous improvisation, combining a song's creation and performance, is rather remote from the medieval skill of oral composition which required not only a creative inspiration but also a strong singing voice and a prodigious memory. The function of memory in composition is illuminated in a *razo* about Arnaut Daniel; as Arnaut accepts the challenge of an unknown jongleur at the court of King Richard I of England, to create an original song, we are presented with a rare glimpse of actual compositional technique:

> Lo joglar[s] fes son cantar leu e tost; e[t] els non avian mas detz jorns d'espazi, et devia.s jutgar per lo rey a cap de cinc jorns. Lo joglar[s] demandet a.N Arnaut si avia fag, e.N Arnautz respos que oc, passat a tres jorns; e no.n avia pessat. E.l joglar[s] cantava tota nueg sa canso, per so que be la saubes. E.N Arnautz pesset co.l traysses isquern; tan que venc una nueg, e.l joglar[s] la cantava, e N'Arnautz la va tota arretener, e.l so. E can foro denan lo rey, N'Arnautz dis que volia retraire sa chanso, e comenset mot be la chanso que.l joglar[s] avia facha. (Boutière and Schutz 62-63)

> (The joglar composed his song easily and quickly; and they had but ten days of space, then five before they had to submit to the king's judgment. The joglar asked Lord Arnaut whether he had done his; and Lord Arnaut answered yes, three days ago; but he hadn't yet thought of it. And the joglar sang his song all night long, in order to know it better; and Lord Arnaut thought he would play a joke: so there came a night when the joglar was singing it, and Lord Arnaut memorized the entire song and its

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[2] See Pickens, *The Songs of Jaufre Rudel.*

> tune. And when they came before the king, Lord Arnaut said that he wanted to recount his song, and he began very well the song that the joglar had made. [Aubrey 127])

As the story concludes, the king is greatly amused by Arnaut's joke and gives gifts to both Arnaut and the jongleur, but awards the song to Arnaut.

Memory also figures in a song's circulation and preservation. An interesting account detailing the transmission of a song from teacher to student (in this case the student is his lady-love) is found in the romance of *Galeran de Bretagne*:

> 'Fresne,' said Galeran, 'I have tried out my skill with a new *lai* and I am very keen to teach it to you at once'. . . . 'Begin,' said Fresne, 'then I will harp and learn the *lai* on my instrument.' Then he began to play, and she listened, studying the way he cast his fingers on the strings. When he had listened to the notes, he tuned them with his tuning key so that they were perfectly accorded. The words and the music were sweet, and he sang and played the *lai* until she knew both the words and the tune; then she tuned her silver-stringed harp to the *lai*. (Foulet 2278-81, 2295-301 and 2316-20; in Page 96)

A song was taught orally from one generation to the next; but when the troubadour movement wained, if a song did not have the fortune of being written in a *chansonnier*, the chances were that it would eventually grow unpopular, and be forgotten and lost. Guiraut de Cabreira upbraids a jongleur for not maintaining his repertoire, and thereby losing the songs of several notable composers:

> Ja vers novel
> bon d'En Rudell
> non cug que.t pas sotz lo guingnon,
> da Markabrun,
> ni de negun
> ni d'En Anfos ni d'En Eblon. . . .
>
> Del Saine cuit
> c'ajas perdut
> et oblidat los motz e.l son.

> ren non dizetz
> ni non sabetz,
> pero no i ha meillor chanson. (Mila 244; 25-30, 40-45)

> (Even a new *vers*, a good one of Lord Rudel, I do not believe can pass from beneath your moustache, of Marcabru, nor of anyone, nor of Lord Alfonso or Lord Eble. . . .
>
> Of [the song of] Saxons I believe that you have lost and forgotten the words and the tune; you have said nothing of it nor do you know of it, even though there is no better song. [Aubrey 145])

In spite of the many allusions to oral composition and transmission, we cannot hope to prove whether the songs of the troubadours are all transcriptions of compositions made and circulated orally, or whether later songs, either text or music, were written down at the moment of composition. (Though there are no manuscripts containing troubadour melodies dating from their period of production, words and music had been recorded for several centuries already in the sacred tradition.) Several of the troubadours are described as learned men who "ben saup letras" (*vida* of Guiraut de Cabanso; Boutière and Schutz 217), and their learning may have influenced their compositional technique. Whether 'knowing letters' included writing as well as reading is difficult to ascertain; but at least two troubadours were scribes: Ferrari de Ferrara "wrote better than anyone in the world and made many good and beautiful books" ("Maistre Ferrari de Ferrara . . . sap molt be letras, e scrivet meil ch'om del mond e feis de molt bos libres e de beill[s]." [Boutière and Schutz 581]); while Elias Carel (c. 1200-1225), though a poor composer and performer, could notate words and music:

> Elias Carelz fo de Peiregorc . . . mal cantava e mal trobava e mal violava e peichs parlava, e ben escrivia motz e sons. (Boutière and Schutz 254)

Interestingly, Elias' skill in writing down words and melodies does not preclude a talent for "trobava." Writing is never mentioned as a stage of composition, and "sap letras" seems to bear little relation to a troubadour's compositional skill. In fact, Arnaut Daniel is said to have abandoned his learning when he became a jongleur ("et abandonet las letras, et fetz se joglars" [Boutière and Schutz 59]). A twelfth-century poem by Arnaut de Tintignac attests that his song was recorded only after it had been completed: "Here is my poem, successfully completed. Now all it needs is a talented singer. O Clerk, dear in God, pray write this down!" (P-C 34.2; Falvy 26). Gavaudan also hopes that his song will be recorded for posterity: "This poem is good, if someone will write it down well" (P-C 174.8; Falvy 26). These references confirm that transcription took place after the creation of the song, and orality remained central to the art of song-making.

Unfortunately, *trobar* and *far* are often erroneously interpreted in the sense of written composition. Anthony Bonner, for instance, translates Peire d'Alvernhe's "Chantarai pus vey qu'a far m'er / d'un chant nou que.m gronh dins lo cays" (Del Monte 4.1-2) as "I'll sing for I see I must write the new song groaning within my jaw" (Bonner 73). The imprecise choice of modern vocabulary distorts the true image portrayed by the troubadour, of a belaboured singer straining to give vent to — *far* — the song and emotion which has already formed in his heart (or mind). Bonner's translation also destroys the focus on oral performance which the troubadour emphasizes through a repetition of "sing" and "song." The wordplay created by *chantarai*, *chant*, *chantars*, *chantes*, *chantar*, *chans* and *chansos* in each line is disturbed by Bonner's insertion of the modern concept of writing.

A similar distortion occurs in Stephen Nichols' translation of the *tornada* to

"Chantars no pot gaire valer" by Bernart de Ventadorn:

> Lo vers es fis e naturaus
> e bos celui qui be l'enten,
> e melher es, qui.l joi aten. (Nichols 15.50-52)

A valid translation might read, "The song is fine and well-formed [as in nature] and good for him who understands it well, and it is better for him who hopes for joy." Nichols chooses, however, to translate line fifty as "the verse is perfect and well-written" (82); his use of "verse" and "well-written" signifies a purely literary perspective and increases the deceptive belief that the troubadours' artform was firstly poetical, and secondly musical. Nichols' translation is representative of the predominant philological standpoint which habitually advocates such translations as "verse" for *vers* and "poem" for *chan*. Yet many scholars take both *vers* and *chan* or *c[h]anso[n]* to mean "song," and it appears that the troubadours did the same.

Though *chan*, *c[h]anso[n]*, and *vers* are all translatable as "song," there is a variation in their usage which conveys some interesting connotations of each word. *Chan[t]* is first of all the most closely related to *chantar*, the act of singing. Bird-songs are always *chans*, never *vers* or *cansos*. *Chan* therefore possesses connotations of activity, artlessness and spontaneity, and is the most general term, referring to anything that can be sung, whether it has words or not. *Canso* (or *chanson*) is connected with the love-song, and the specific AB AB X form, which led Dante to call the vernacular songs *canzone*. Yet the specific connotations of this term were not established until the late twelfth century. The term *vers* also underwent a semantic metamorphosis, from a general name for any song to a specific style, connected with the *trobar clus* and serious subject matter.

It is generally accepted that throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries, *chan*, *canso*, and *vers* are used interchangeably as "song." The *vida* of Peire d'Alvernhe (c. 1158-1180)[3] attests to the general meaning of *vers* early on in the troubadour movement; it tells us, "canson no fetz, que non era adoncs negus cantars apellatz cansos, mas vers; qu'En Guirautz de Borneill fetz la premeira canson que anc fos faita" (Boutière and Schutz 218-19) (he did not make any *cansos*, for songs were not called *cansos* then but *vers*; and Lord Guiraut de Bornelh [c. 1165-1200] composed the first *canso* that was ever made). Another biographer corroborates this statement in Marcabru's (c. 1130-1150) *vida*, saying, "Et en aquel temps non appellava hom cansson, mas tot qant hom cantava eron vers" (Boutière and Schutz 212) (and at that time one did not call them *cansos*, for anything that was sung was a *vers*). In contrast, the *vida* of Raimbaut d'Orange (c. 1144-1173) distinguishes between the two terms: "e fo bons trobaires de vers e de chansons" (Boutière and Schutz 264) (he was a good composer of *vers* and *cansos*). Rather than discrediting the accuracy of the previous statements, this may perhaps indicate that Raimbaut's biographer did not mind using more modern terminology to describe his earlier compositions, or was unaware of the name's historical development. Yet it would be unwise to place absolute trust in the *vidas*' testimony. Bernart de Ventadorn (c. 1150-1180), for example, a contemporary of Peire d'Alvernhe's whose productive period slightly predates Guiraut de Bornelh's, uses *chans* or *chanso* over twenty-five times and

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[3] **Except in the case of Raimbaut d'Aurenga, whose dates indicate birth and death, all dates refer to approximate periods of artistic production, and are taken from Hill and Bergin.**

vers about eleven times. Although the two terms are juxtaposed in three songs,[4] seeming to indicate, if not a semantic opposition, at least some contrast or variation of meaning, no consistent stylistic or structural differences distinguish his *vers* from his *chansos*. Today, all of Bernart's songs are commonly referred to as *cansos*.

When the biographer claims that Guiraut de Bornelh composed the first *canso*, he is surely not implying that Guiraut's predecessors[5] are not concerned with courtly love — Bernart de Ventadorn's forty-three extant songs all revolve around love, and yet are called both *cansos* and *vers* — or that Guiraut was the inventor of the specific *canso* structure: Jaufre Rudel, Marcabru, Bernart and Peire d'Alvernhe all use the AB AB X stanzaic form. Instead the author of the *vidas* points to a divergence in compositional style which Guiraut addressed and which affected the use of *canso* and *vers*.

J.H. Marshall and Linda Paterson agree that "before the mid twelfth century *vers* is the common name for a lyric song" (Paterson 115), and that after 1150 the terms *vers* and *canso* run concurrently, while more exact terms, such as *tenso* and *sirventes* emerge to describe special genres. It is at this time that the specific meanings of *vers* and *canso* expand antithetically. By the early thirteenth century, *vers* and *canso* are frequently used in opposition to each other, distinguished not by structure or subject-matter, nor by poetic or musical emphasis; rather they indicate two distinct styles of composition which are held in contrary value by various troubadours. In "M'entencion ai tot'en vers mesa," for instance, Peirol (1185-1221) holds the *vers* in high esteem and rejects the *canso* as a lesser art form:

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[4] "Peirol, com avetz tan estat / que no fezetz vers ni chanso?" (Nichols 32.1-2); "A, tantas bonas chansos / e tan bo vers aurai faih" (Nichols 8.1-2); "e ja Deus no.m do / mais faire vers ni chanso" (Nichols 6.23-24).

[5] According to Bergin and Hill, the productive periods of Guilhem IX, Jaufre Rudel, Marcabru, Cercamon, Raimbaut d'Aurenga, Bernart de Ventadorn and Peire d'Alvernhe all predate (and in some cases overlap) that of Guiraut de Bornelh.

> M'entencion ai tot' en vers mesa
> cum valgues mais de chant qu'ieu anc fezes;
> e pot esser que fora mieills apresa
> chansoneta, s'ieu faire la volgues,
> mas chantars torn' en leujaria;
> e vers, qui ben faire.l sabia,
> es ben semblan que degues mais valer,
> per qu'ieu hi vuoill demostrar mon saber. (Aston 20.1-8)

> (I have concentrated my whole endeavour in a *vers* so that it may be worth more than any other song I ever made; and perhaps a *chansoneta* would be easier to learn, if I wished to make one, but singing turns to frivolity; and a *vers*, if one knows how to make it well, appears to be of greater worth, wherefore I now wish to display my skill [in this form].)

Peirol adds a diminutive ending to *chanson*, emphasizing its lower value and trivial nature compared to the worthier *vers*. By deprecating the act of singing, he seems to imply that his *vers* will not be sung, as a *canso* is; yet there is surviving music for this song, and the overall form uses the *canso*'s AB AB X structure. Although there is a definite opposition in his juxtaposition of *vers* and *chansoneta*, the difference is not one of poetry and music; Peirol's *vers* is not a poem in a purely literary sense, but still a song.

The initial separation of *vers* and *canso* was based not upon thematic groupings or a divergence of musical and poetic arts, but on stylistic considerations. Linda Paterson observes that the poetic division of *trobar clus* and *trobar leu* is linked to the troubadours' use of *vers* and *canso*. In the songs of Guiraut de Bornelh and Raimbaut d'Aurenga *vers* is associated with the heaviness, complexity and obscurity of vocabulary and meaning characteristic of the *trobar clus*; while *cansos* are characterized by the lightness, simplicity and clarity of the *leu* style. Guiraut de Bornelh discusses these terms in "A penas sai comensar": he associates the term *vers* with the *clus* style, and, when he attempts to make his song *leuger*, it becomes a *canso*:

A penas sai comensar
un vers que volh far leuger
e si n'ai pensat des er
que.l fezes de tal razo
que l'entenda tota gens
e qu'el fassa leu chantar;
qu'eu.l fatz per pla deportar.

Be.l saupra plus cobert far;
mas non a chans pretz enter,
can tuch no.n son parsoner.
Qui que.s n'azir, me sap bo,
can auch dire per contens
mo sonet rauquet e clar
e l'auch a la fon portar.

Ja, pos volrai clus trobar,
no cut aver man parer
ab so que ben ai mester
a far una leu chanso;
qu'eu cut c'atretan grans sens
es, qui sap razo gardar,
com los motz entrebeschar. (Kolsen 4.1-21)

> (I hardly know how to begin a *vers* which I want to make light, and indeed I have been thinking since yesterday about how I might compose it on such a theme that all people may understand it, and how I might make it easy to sing; for I compose it purely to entertain.
>
> I should certainly know how to make it more veiled; but a song has an incomplete reputation when all are not able to share it. Whoever else may be angry about this, I am pleased when I hear people vying with each other in repeating my melody hoarsely and clearly, and when I hear it carried to the well.
>
> I do not, even if I wanted to compose in the *clus* style, think I should have many an appearance, so I am indeed obliged to make a light *chanso*; for I believe that it is just as clever to know how to preserve

> one's theme as to interlace the words. [Paterson 102-103])

Paterson suggests that this song "marks a turning point in Guiraut's attitude to *clus* and *leu*" (116-17). Previously Guiraut advocated the more obscure *trobar clus*; but in "A penas sai comensar" he insists that the *trobar leu* is equally difficult and valuable. Perhaps this is why Guiraut is hailed as the inventor of the *canso*, for he appears to be the earliest troubadour to define and defend the *leu* style.

Raimbaut d'Aurenga also tackles the *clus-leu* controversy and, like Guiraut, associates the name *vers* with *clus* and *canso* with *leu*:

> Aissi mou
> un sonet nou
> on ferm e latz
> chansson leu,
> pos vers plus greu
> fan sorz dels fatz. (Pattison 8.1-6)

> (Thus I begin a new melody in which I fasten and bind up a light *chanso*, since the heavier *vers* make the witless deaf. [Paterson 170])

The distinction then, is between two styles of composition, not between poetry and music, for a *vers*, no matter what its exact difference from a *canso*, is still a song. There is nothing in the troubadours usage to suggest that *vers* has less ties to music and more to literature than *canso*, and therefore merits a purely poetical translation. It is only our modern word, "verse," with its predominantly literary connotations, which influences scholars to translate *vers* as "poem." When Frederick Goldin translates "qu'ieu farai sai mos vers e mas chansos" (Peire Vidal 49.31) as "for I would make my poetry and songs right here" (Goldin 265), he, like many scholars, establishes a juxtaposition which distinguishes between *vers* as a literary phenomenon and *chansos* as a musical one. Yet this is obviously not the intent of the troubadour. The common juxtaposition of "vers e chansos" does not always indicate the semantic differences inherent in Guiraut or Raimbaut's usage. Nor does it possess any universal opposition such as in "lo motz e.l son" (the words and the melody). Rather it may most often be merely a poetic device — an example of the parallelism common throughout medieval rhetoric. The pairing of similar terms — "joglars e chantadors," "dir e contar," "valens e pros," "chans e condutz," "l'us . . . e l'autre . . ." — gains a formulaic imprint by virtue of its frequent use.

The troubadours themselves hardly refer to writing of any kind. They have no word corresponding to (or derived from) the Latin *poesi* and rarely use *escrire* or refer to *letras*. Van der Werf (1984, 4) notes that one case is found in the final stanza of Bernart de Ventadorn's "En cossirer et en esmai," where he is consoled by the fact that his lady can read, and since he cannot speak to her or send a messenger, he resolves to send her his song in writing:

> Pois messatger no.lh trametrai
> ni a me dire no.s cove,
> negu cosselh de me no sai.
> Masi d'una re me conort be:
> ela sap letras et enten
> et agrada.m qu'eu escria
> los motz, e s'a leis plazia
> legis los al meu sauvamen. (Nichols 17.49-56)

> (Since I will not send a messenger to her, and since for me to speak is not fitting, I see no help for myself. But I console myself with one thing: she knows and understands letters. It pleases me to write the words, and if it pleases her, let her read them for my deliverance. [Nichols 88])

The only other reference to writing is found in Jaufre Rudel's "Quan lo rius de la fontana"; but Jaufre acknowledges writing only to dismiss it:

> Senes breu de la parguamina
> tramet lo vers, que chantam
> en plana lengua romana,
> a.n Hugo Bru per Filhol. (Jeanroy 2.29-33)

(Without any letter of parchment I send this *vers*, which we sing in our plain romance tongue, to En Hugo Brun, by Filhol [Goldin 105]).

Singing, on the other hand, is a fundamental element of the troubadours' themes. As Van der Werf points out, "unambiguous references to an audible performance easily outnumber allusions to a written transmission" (1984, 4). The *vidas* and *razos* abound with references to singing, as do the *tornadas* of many troubadour songs. Fifteen of Bernart de Ventadorn's songs have *tornadas* which attest to the song's method of transmission; while they often contain a direct instruction for his jongleur or messenger, or add an extra message to his lady, almost all of them refer to singing. In "Per doutz chan qu.l rossinhols fai," he exhorts his courtly messenger, Hugh, to sing his song eagerly to the Queen of the Normans — "Huguet mos cortes messatgers / chantatz ma chanso volonters / a rëina dels Normans" (Nichols 33.43-45); while in "Amors, e que.us es vejaire?" he addresses his jongleurs, Alegret and Ferran:

> Ma chanson apren a dire,
> Alegret; e tu, Ferran,
> porta la.m a mo Tristan
> que sap be gabar e rire. (Nichols 4.61-64)

(Learn to sing my song, Alegret; and you, Ferran, carry it for me to my Tristan, who well knows how to mock and to laugh. [Nichols 53])

In the final stanza and *tornada* of "Tot quan fatz de be ni dic," Raimon Miraval instructs his jongleurs, "Audiart . . . et sa companha," as well as another whom he hopes will learn his song:

> Dreg a mon belh Mai d'amic
> chansos vai dir que t'entenda,
> e si tan fai que t'aprenda,
> ben tenh mon chantar per ric. (Switten 1985, 21.41-44)

> (Go, song, straightway to my beautiful *Mai d'amic*, that she may hear you, and if she goes so far as to learn you, I shall consider my singing noble. [Switten 1985, 227])

Peirol also desires that his lady will learn the song he has composed for her:

> Chansonet' ab aitan
> dreich a midonz t'en vai,
> e digas li, si.l plai,
> que t'aprenda et chan. (Aston 8.53-56)

> (Go straightway, o song, to my lady and tell her, if it please her, to learn and sing you. [Aston 86]).

Arnaut Daniel anticipates a royal audience, saying:

> Era.t para,
> chans e condutz
> formir
> al rei qui t'er escuoills (Toja 6.86-89)

> (Get ready now my song and melody, to bring your meaning to the king, who will receive you well [Goldin 215]);

while Guiraut de Bornelh's songs are so famous even the common townsfolk sing them:

> me sap bo,
> can auch dire per contens
> mo sonet rauquet e clar
> e l'auch a la fon portar. (Kolsen 4.11-14)

> (I am pleased when I hear people vying with each other in repeating my melody hoarsely and clearly, and when I hear it carried to the well. [Paterson 103])

The troubadours discuss not only who sings their songs but also how they are sung. Often a *tornada* is used to admonish a jongleur for his poor singing, or urge him to sing his best. Guillaume IX begins the convention by saying,

> Lay al mieu amic Daurostre
> dic e man que chan e [no] bram. (Jeanroy 8.29-30)

(To my friend Daurostre over there I send word, telling him to sing and not screech. [Bond 47]);

while Bertran de Born sums up a mischievous *sirventes joglaresc*, making the poor minstrel, Mailolin, the butt of his wit:

> Raimons de Planel, quar es pros,
> vuolh qu'avia.l sirventes de vos;
> e.l sons iescha.n ab trebalha,
>
> Quar sordeis chantatz que paos
> e gavanhatz los motz e.ls sos,
> per qu'es fols qui los vos balha.
> (Appel 41.43-48)

(I want Raimon de Planell to hear the sirventes from you because he is brave. Let the melody come out painfully, because you sing worse than a peacock, and you spoil the words and the notes; whoever gives them to you is crazy! [Paden 316])

Peire d'Alvernhe does not confine himself to a *tornada* when he mocks his jongleurs and fellow troubadours. In "Cantarai d'aquestz trobadors," his playful disparagement of contemporary poet-musicians begins in the very first stanza, as he outlines his poetic intentions:

> Cantarai d'aqestz trobadors
> que canton de maintas colors
> e.l pieier cuida dir mout gen;
> mas a cantar lor er aillors
> q'entrametre.n vei cen pastors
> c'us non sap qe.s mont'o.s dissen. (Del Monte 12.1-6)

(I shall sing about those troubadours who sing in many fashions, and all

> praise their own verses, even the most apalling; but they shall have to sing elsewhere, for a hundred competing shepherds I hear, and not one knows whether the melody's rising or falling. [Goldin 171])

In the body of this poem, Peire criticizes twelve troubadours and jongleurs, accusing some of stealing others' works, of poor song-writing, or poorer singing:

e ditz totz sos vers raucamen,
per que es avols sos retins
c'atretan s'en fari'us chins. (33-35)

> (he recites all his verses with a raucous voice so his singing sounds like hell, for a dog would sing as well. [Goldin 173])

Peire complains that one cannot rhyme accurately and another uses a cross between Provençal and Italian. Sometimes, as in the case of Bernart de Ventadorn, he attacks a troubadour's ancestry, sometimes their looks or clothes. He scorns those who beg rewards instead of working hard and ridicules first one's lack of success in love and then one's poor skill at arms. But mostly he points out the unmusicality of these self-proclaimed musicians — "not one knows whether the melody's rising or falling," he protests. Though this song was written in jest (the *tornada* reveals, "Lo vers fo faitz als enflabotz / a Puoich-vert, tot iogan rizen" [85-86], [this song was made to the noise of bagpipes / at Puivert, with much laughter and play (Goldin 175)]), it demonstrates a concern with singing and performance as integral aspects of the troubadours' art. Peire concludes the satire by praising his own musicality, valuing the ability to render a melody accurately and pleasingly above any other skill:

Peire d'Alvernhe a tal votz
que canta de sus e de sotz,
e lauza.s mout a tota gen;
pero maistres es de totz. (79-82)

> (Peire d'Alvernhe, now he has such a voice he sings the high notes, and the low notes, [and the in-between], and before all people gives himself much praise; and so he is the master of all who here convene. [Goldin 175])

The troubadours' preoccupation with singing attests to the important role which orality played in forming their concept of a song — a concept in which language and music were thought of primarily as sound. In our literate society, words are connected equally with writing and sound; in an oral culture, however, "the word can *only* be embodied through sound" (Treitler 1986, 38). Classical sources placed great importance on the spoken word, in poetics and rhetoric, and this influenced the medieval concept of language as sound. Paul Zumthor maintains that "la voix humaine constitue dans toute culture un phénomène central" (1990, 10); in an oral culture, the human voice is not only central, it is indispensable. For a large portion of the medieval population, speech was the only means of communication. Whether used to conduct business transactions, seal contracts, spread news or gossip or promote community and domestic relations, the spoken word was an integral yet ordinary part of daily life — as necessary and unnoticed as a breathable atmosphere. Yet at times the human voice carried an authority which surpassed ordinary usage: heard from the elevated lectern of a church and repeated in ritualized chant, language was clothed with the mysterious religious power of the Word of God. It imparted legal and judicial authority as political decrees were pronounced and disputes settled. During the recitation of heroic epics, language became a valorization of a nation's history and a means of uniting communities and instilling patriotism; and it delineated a form of exquisite beauty in the passionate performance of a love-song. "Whether sung to oneself, declaimed to others or chanted together in rituals," writes Paul

Hillier, "the magic potency of the word" was evident to the people of the Middle Ages. This power inherent in spoken language is revealed in a performance of troubadour songs. Paul Zumthor, in his book, *La lettre et la voix*, discusses the integral role of "l'action de la voix," in a performance situation. Whenever language is spoken, the action of the human voice is predominant: "Lorsque le poète ou son interprète chante ou récite (que le texte soit improvisé ou mémorisé), sa voix seule confère à celui-ci son autorité" (1987, 19). Even if a song is performed from a manuscript copy, rather than from memory, the authority of the written word "ne peut néanmoins éliminer la prédominance de l'effet vocal" (Zumthor 1987, 20).

The troubadours were concerned about the words of their songs not only for the sake of innovative poetic form and clarity of meaning. The diversity and complexity of rhyme scheme indicates that at least to some extent, they thought of their poetry as a spoken medium and were concerned about the sound of their words. Stephen Nichols finds this particularly true of Bernart de Ventadorn: "The variety of forms uncovered by linguistic analysis in Bernart's language attests the importance of words as sounds to troubadour poetry. It is above all a poetry of rhyme where the sound patterns created in a poem almost seem to take precedence over the total meaning conveyed by the words" (Nichols 16). Margaret Switten comes to a similar conclusion in her study of the *cansos* of Raimon Miraval: although, she admits, "choice of sounds is to a degree dictated by the exigencies of a given scheme, by the resources of the language and by the meaning of a word," still the "sonorous patterns . . . [created by] specific rhyme sounds [may] have been combined with the intention of forming a musical pattern" (1985, 49). Besides the obvious element of rhyme, verbal manipulation, alliteration and echo are common elements of medieval versification. Valerie Drogus declares that in Bernart's works, there exists a "subtle interweaving of sounds, beginning, ending and in the middle of words, sometimes forming symmetrical patterns, but always impressing the audience with a formal richness" (Drogus 63).

The sound of the words was in some cases as important as the sound of the music; indeed, spoken language was considered by medieval scholars to be a form of music. John Stevens observes that early theorists were "working with a definition of *musica* which is broad enough to include them both [music and text], and which indeed does not always distinguish between them" (381). Guido of Arezzo, for example, identifies in language a musical *harmonia* similar to melody:

> Thus in verse we often see such concordant and mutually congruous lines that you wonder, as it were, at a certain harmony of language. And if music were added to this, with a similar internal congruity, you would be doubly charmed by a twofold melody. (Palisca 74)

In 1840, Thomas Carlyle wrote, "all speech, even the commonest speech, has something of song in it: not a parish in the world but has its parish-accent;— the rhythm or tune to which the people there sing what they have to say" (*Heros and Hero Worship*, in Shapiro 148). This type of appreciation for the aural beauty of language focused the medieval song-maker's attention on the sound of his text, and enabled him to understand the musicality of language. References to speaking or reciting a song, found alongside references to singing, are less ambiguous when one understands the closeness of medieval speech and music. Aubrey admits that "the distinction between *sonar* ["to sound"], *cantar* ["to sing"], and *dire* ("to say") is often quite obscure," especially when they are juxtaposed in a single line:

> No sap chantar qui so non di (Jaufre Rudel; Jeanroy 6.1)

> (He cannot sing who says no tune [Pickens 223]);

> A penas sai don m'apreing
> so q'en chantan m'auzetz dir (Raimon Miraval; Switten 2.1-2)

> (I scarcely know where I learn what you hear me say in singing [Switten 148]);

> Ab mon vers dirai chansso
> ab leus motz ez ab leu so (Raimbaut d'Aurenga; Pattison 30.1)

> (Within my *vers* I shall speak a *canso*, with easy words and an easy tune [Paterson 171]);

> Ma chanson apren a dire (Bernart de Ventadorn; Nichols 4.61)

> (Learn to sing [say] my song [Nichols 53]);

> Bernartz de Ventadorn l'enten
> e.l di e.l fai e.l joi n'aten. (Bernart de Ventadorn; Nichols 15.54)

> (Bernart of Ventadorn conceived it [this song] and recites it and made it and hopes for joy from it.)

One can identify in these instances, a profound intimacy between the spoken word and sung melody — both forms of *musica* to theoreticians such as Guido of Arezzo. The use of "dir" and "cantar" in the same phrase does not necessarily imply a separation of musical song from poetry, hinting at a written and purely literary artform. Instead, *cantar* and *dir* both refer to the vocal, and therefore musical, performance of a complete song in which words and music are combined in sound.

The medieval association of spoken language with music formed a basis for the union of text and melody in the sound of a song; the unity of language and melody which has been inferred from structural analysis becomes wholly apparent in a song's oral delivery. Song lives in the action of its singing; an act which simultaneously realises language and melody. Leo Treitler affirms that in the Middle Ages "music and language must have been understood as a unitary mode of expression" for they are "united . . . in the body's enunciation . . . as a single physical act" (Treitler 19, 15). Fused with melody in the human voice, language possesses a musicality which enhances its poetic beauty and surpasses the calculated cleverness of a *sirventes* or *coblas rimas*. For Jean Beck the vocalization of a song reveals its ultimate beauty and meaning: "La beauté de la poésie lyrique du moyen âge réside dans l'agencement ingénieux des voix, dans le jeu des syllables et des vers" (Beck 1927, 76). Performance breathes life into poetry, and brings melodic presentation to the fore. Hearing the songs, one cannot again dismiss the importance of their musicality in favour of written text. As Beck asserts, performance is the primary function of troubadour songs; without it, he declares, one cannot understand their music, and the poetry becomes dull and boring. But an aural experience "nous permet déjà de constater la haute valeur artistique de la mélodie. Lisons le texte poétique seul, qui est plutôt banal, puis chantons-le sur sa mélodie, nous apprécierons ainsi sans peine le talent du compositeur et l'importance capitale de la musique dans la lyrique médiévale" (Beck 1910, 78). Clearly Beck values the troubadours' melodies over the words of their songs. Indeed, the melodic beauty revealed through performance invests the listener with a particular appreciation for the sound of a song, which our modern perspective may assert as a musical function, divested of literary influence. Valerie Drogus speculates that "because these poems were always performed one might begin to suspect that . . . the words of the troubadour lyric served mainly as the vehicle for the presentation for the music" (Drogus 8). Yet in a performance setting, words and music are combined with equal weight; one hears the song as a single, unitary mode of expression, and it is as difficult to extricate the words from the melody in the midst of a performance as it is easy to do so when looking at a manuscript.

When we understand sound as the essence and performance as the primary function of a song, we can truly look upon it as a single, complete unit. Peter Christian prefers to view medieval song as a combination, not of words and music, but of "voice and form, neither falling exclusively within the province of text *or* music, but each giving rise to text *and* music" (353). The performance allows us to experience both text and music simultaneously, and extends the knowledge of structure and style which has been gleaned through scriptural analysis, bringing one to a new understanding of form. "The voice seems to realise the form — indeed it is the only way that the form could be experienced, as opposed to merely contemplated — and the form provides the basis of vocal expression, and whatever degree of modulation was envisaged in the tradition" (Christian 354).

Performance is also a clear means to determine the expressive reciprocation of text and melody. The conventions of the genre offer little room for thematic development or expressiveness through text alone; the narrator's emotional avowals can quickly lose sincerity and a reader's interest, and the poetry lapses into something which Jean Beck describes as "plutôt banal" (1910, 78). It appears to be up to the music to add an expressive quality; yet when a correspondence of melodic device and poetic theme is sought through structural analysis, there are always skeptics who object and doubt if a melody possesses a range of emotion, sufficiently expressive of the contents of stanza or *canso*. For them, the theory of melodic expressiveness can never be conclusively substantiated through analysis of a written document. But when sung and heard, there is no question as to the expressive capacity of a song. Peter Christian asserts that

> in a semi-oral tradition . . . the gap between the written record of a song and the reality of the genre in performance is likely to be considerable. And the written record of a melody is likely to be a particularly abstract representation of the music, whose expressive or affective qualities and whose relation to the text will only be apparent when realised in a performance according to the conventions of the genre. (354)

Only when unified text and melody are experienced through singing can the emotional beauty and passion of these courtly lyrics be truly felt.

Belief in the emotive power of music was fostered unquestionably throughout the Middle Ages. The Biblical story of David soothing King Saul's rage by playing his harp, and the classical tale of Orpheus' musical powers, were both well known and often echoed in Romance literature. Daurel comforts grieving Beton with a lay of love, Tristan moves King Mark's court to tears with his singing and harping, Volker sings the Burgundians to sleep in the *Nibelungenlied*, and Iseult's singing captures the hearts of her audience with a siren-like enchantment. The emotional effects of song are also frequently deliberated in theoretical treatises. Guido of Arezzo firmly believes in the power of music, and discusses the process by which a song affects the human soul, in his *Micrologus*:

> Nor is it any wonder if the hearing is charmed by a variety of sounds, since the sight rejoices in a variety of colors, the sense of smell is gratified by a variety of odors, and the palate delights in changing flavors.

> For thus through the windows of the body the sweetness of apt things enters wondrously into the recesses of the heart. Hence it is that the well-being of both heart and body is lessened or increased, as it were, by particular tastes and smells and even by the sight of certain colors. So it is said that of old a certain madman was recalled from insanity by the music of the physician Asclepiades. . . . (Palisca 69-70)

A similar passage, found in John Afflighem's *De Musica*, claims a host of mental and physical states as the possible results of music:

> It should not pass unmentioned that singing [*musicus cantus*] has great power of stirring the souls of its hearers in that it delights the ears, uplifts the mind, arouses fighters to warfare, revives the prostrate and despairing, strengthens wayfarers, disarms bandits, assuages the wrathful, gladdens the sorrowful and distressed, pacifies those at strife, dispels idle thoughts, and allays the frenzy of the demented. (Palisca 136)

John goes on to recount the stories of David and Saul, and the Greek physician Asclepiades who cured the insanity of a mad patient by singing to him. With widespread conviction of singing's potency, it is no wonder that composers placed primary importance on the communication of particular emotions through their songs. Such communication necessitates expressive singing.

The troubadours, who enjoined their jongleurs not to mar their handiwork with poor singing, and were concerned about the communication of a song's *razo*, certainly desired a fully comprehensive and expressive delivery:

A midons lo chant e.l siscle
clar, qu'el col l'en intro.l giscle,
selh que sap gen chantar ab joy,
que no tanh a chantador croy.
(Raimbaut d'Aurenga; Pattison 39.55-59)

> (To my mistress may he sing and whistle it — clearly, that its switches enter her heart — who can sing nobly, with joy, for it befits no base singer. [Press 109])

Even though, as Christopher Page accurately states, "nothing will ever be known for sure about the way in which medieval singers paced and phrased [their songs] . . . about the vocal timbres which they cultivated or their use of dynamic shading" (vii), there is no reason to believe that a medieval singer would not have used every means at his vocal command to produce an exciting and captivating rendition of his song. An expressive performance would result in a greater reward for the jongleur or troubadour, and might ultimately win the desired lady's favour or patronage; it was also necessary to perpetuate the idea that one's song was an outpouring of sincere love:

Dinz el cor me nais la flama
q'eis per la boc'en chantan,
don domnas e drutz abras.
E.ill sonet son dols e bas,
coind'e leugier e cortes,
per qe de grat son apres;
que tals amera tiran
que pre mos bels ditz s'abriva.
(Raimon Miraval; Switten 19.9-16)

> (Within my heart is born the flame which comes from my mouth in song, by means of which I set ladies and lovers ablaze. And the melodies are sweet and low, charming and light and courtly; therefore they are learned willingly; for such a one would be slow to love who rushes in because of my fine words. [Switten 219])

The conventional nature induction, in which the poet is moved by the signs and songs of spring, promotes the image of a song which arises from joy and will, in turn, inspire joy in anyone who listens to it. The joyful tenor of Bernart de Ventadorn's lyrics warrants an expressive delivery, and hints that those who hear them will at once recognize a superlative emotional inspiration in his eloquent songs:

Pel doutz chan que.l rossinhols fai
la noih can me sui adormitz

revelh de joi totz esbäitz
d'amor pensius e cossirans;
c'aisso es mos melhers mesters
que tostems ai joi volunters
et ab joi comensa mos chans.

Qui sabia lo joi qu'eu ai
que jois fos vezutz ni auzitz
totz autre jois fora petitz
vas qu'eu tenc que.l meus jois es grans.
Tals se fai conhdes e parlers
que.n cuid' esser rics e sobrers
de fin' amor, que'eu n'ai dos tans.
(Nichols 33.1-14)

> (During the night when I am asleep, I wake with joy at the nightingale's sweet song, all confused, troubled and pensive in love; for this is my best pastime, in which I always gladly take joy; and with joy my song begins.
>
> If someone knew the joy I have, and this joy were seen and heard, all other joys would be slight next to the one I have, so great is my joy. A man becomes genial and eloquent when he feels rich and great in true love. And I have twice my share! [Nichols 139])

As Peter Christian remarks, "a singer is seen as transmitting to his audience the joy or sorrow that his lady has brought him" (350). The aesthetic purpose of music to gladden or please its hearers, as bird-song brings "joi" to a lover, was often alluded to in troubadour lyrics. However, just as a *sirventes* may have a stronger didactic or moral tone than a love-*canso*, so a song may evoke not only the joy of love, but also courage, jealousy or desire for battle in the minds of those who listen. An *ensenhamen* by Garin lo Brun suggests that the "melodies and lais" of "jongleurs and singers who speak of love" will alternately "gladden people" and "inspire courage to undertake all feats of bravery":

Joglars e chantadors,
que parlan d'amors
e canton sons e lais,

per que l'om es plus gais,
e meton en corage
de tot prez vassallage,
retenez amoros. (541-47; in Aubrey 144)

Raimon Miraval speaks overtly of a listener's response to his songs. Like Garin lo Brun, he suggests that not only the joy or sorrow of love, but also anger and jealousy, may be evoked in his hearers:

Tals vai mon chan enqueren,
per so qu'en s'emble plus guays,
que d'autra part s'en irays
quan au mos digz e.ls enten.
Tals n'i a per gelozia;
e drut que no segon via
que a bon' amor s'antanh,
conosc que m'en son estranh. (Switten 20.1-8)

> (Many a one solicits my song so that he may go away happier because of it, who on the other hand becomes angry when he hears and understands my compositions. There are some [who behave that way] on account of jealousy. And I know that lovers who do not follow the path that is fitting to true love are, because of this, displeasing to me. [Switten 223])

Bertran de Born openly admits that he wishes to provoke an emotional response from a specific audience, intense enough to instigate a war:

Puois als baros enoia e lor pesa
d'aquesta patz qu'an facha li dui rei,
farai chazo tal que, quan er apresa,
e cadäu sera tant que guerrei. (Appel 27.1-4)

> (Since this peace the two kings have made irritates the barons in their thoughts, I'll make such a song that everyone will be impatient to fight, once it's learned. [Paden 364])

The success of a desired emotional effect relied as much upon the emotive power of music as upon eloquent language, and an expressive pairing of melody with the subject matter of the text was crucial for an effective composition. The tenth-century *Musica*

Enchiriadis discusses the 'meaning' of music and how it affects the human soul; it describes an expressive relationship between melody and emotion:

> Quomodo vero tantam cum animis nostris musica commutationem et societatem habeat? Etsi scimus quadam nos similitudine cum illa compactos [esse], edicere ad liquidum non valemus, nec solum diiudicar melos possumus ex propria naturalitate sonorum, sed etiam rerum. Nam affectus rerum quae canuntur oportet ut imitetur cantionis affectus, ut in tranquillis rebus tranquillae sunt neumae, laetisonae in jucundis, moerentes in tristibus, quae dure sunt dicta vel facta, duris neumis exprimi.
>
> But how may music to such an extent have intercourse and union with our minds? Even though we know that we ourselves are joined by a certain similarity with music, we have not the power to enunciate it clearly; nor can we come to a judgement of a melody considered on its own the basis of the individual nature of its sounds or even of its content. For it is necessary that the emotional characteristics of the song should imitate the emotional characteristics of the things which are being sung about: thus in peaceful matters the neumes are peaceful; in pleasant matters, they are glad-sounding; in sad, they are mournful; those things which have been harshly spoken or done [should be] expressed in harsh notes. (Stevens 403)

The author may be referring here to a mimesis of text and melody on the direct level of individual word-painting, which would take place during composition; or he may be directing singers to provide an expressive performance which will convey the overall emotional atmosphere of the song. "Peaceful," "glad-sounding," "mournful," and "harsh" are all subjective descriptions which have been applied to the tonality of various church modes and specific intervals; however they are equally applicable to the manipulation of the human voice during performance.

The composer and performer (when the two were not combined in the same person) must have worked closely with each other in order to maintain the desired emotional intensity. Although the employment of minstrels was common, there is nothing which conclusively suggests that the troubadours did not also sing their own pieces. Jack Lindsay observes that "Troubadours and jongleurs were closely related. . . . The troubadours were careful to teach their jongleur; and instructions or recommendations to them are common" (121). The Provençal composers realized that the emotional sincerity and expressivity of their song was ultimately dependant upon the singer; they would have chosen and instructed a jongleur carefully, for various performers produce various results.

For example, three twentieth-century performances give different interpretations of Bernart de Ventadorn's "Can vei la lauzeta mover." Paul Hillier's rich baritone dramatically delineates Bernart's undulating melody. His powerful voice is supported by a rhythmic lute accompaniment. The lute is plucked in a percussive manner, and the final is used throughout — almost as a drone — giving the effect of monotonality and underlying the stability of Hillier's strong, earth-bound delivery. In contrast, Sequentia's recording has an airy feel to it. Soprano Barbara Thornton floats lightly over the initial stanzas, growing more emphatic towards the *tornada*. Her ornamentation is echoed on a medieval harp played by Benjamin Bagby, whose runs and cascades provide an ethereal atmosphere, while oriental shadows are produced by emphasizing the pentachord. Sequentia's performance is much less rhythmic and more free-flowing than Hillier's. When Jöel Cohen directs the Camerata Mediterranea he chooses a contrafacture — Guiraut Riquier's "B'em degra de chantar tener" — which uses Bernart's melody. Anne Azema's soprano voice is solider than Thornton's but not less intimate; her expressive declaration takes a very human approach — one which communicates with and evokes an empathetic response from her audience. The harp accompaniment is also less ethereal than Sequentia's interpretation, as it switches between a solid declaration of the final and reiteration of vocal melismas; the instrumental line follows the melody closely in tonality and thematic motif. Azema concludes the song by speaking the final strophe, enhancing the song's final desperate plea to the Virgin Mary. Without the express directions of the composer, these performers had to rely on their own judgement and interpretation. No matter where its emphasis lies, however, each interpretation is an attempt to communicate a series of expressions and emotions to the audience.

There is a paradox in a song's production, performance and reception, akin to the irony inherent in a juxtaposition of two narrative focalizations — the professional composer skillfully conforming to structural and stylistic conventions, and the impassioned lover vocally manifesting his joy or grief in artless song. While an emotive rendition preserves the belief that music is essentially a form of self-expression, it allows that the supposedly individual feelings are created by one composer, sung indiscriminately by various performers and experienced sympathetically by countless others in audiences both medieval and modern. This paradox does not disturb a listening experience, however, or blur the reality of an audience's emotional response. Perhaps the strong desire for an empathetic environment facilitates a deliberate ignorance of the pragmatic problems of creation and transmission. One could rationalize, as does Suzanne Langer, that although "the composer is, indeed, the original subject of the emotions depicted . . . the performer becomes at once his confidant and his mouthpiece . . . [and] he transmits the feelings of the master to a sympathetic audience" (215). Or one may claim a right to the experience as participants in a universal expression of feeling, rather than voyeurs of an individual's passion. Wagner emphatically maintains that "what music expresses, is eternal, infinite and ideal; it does not express the passion, love or longing of such-and-such an individual on such-and-such an occasion, but passion, love or longing itself" (Richard Wagner in Langer 221-222). In spite of narratorial claims to authenticity and individual sincerity, the courtly love held sacred by the troubadours is ultimately not a personal mood, but a universal code of behavior — an ideal state of mind, or heart, for the medieval courtier.

However, whether the emotional sincerity of a song ultimately comes from the creative skill of its composer, or the expressive style of its performer, the openness of a receptive audience is crucial to achieving the desired emotional transmission. Certainly if there is no-one listening there can be no sympathetic communication. The emotion experienced by an audience is ultimately dependant not only on the singer's vocal expressiveness, but also on the listener's disposition and reception of that song. John Afflighem remarks that "different men are attracted by different modes. Just as not everyone's palate is attracted by the same food, but one man enjoys pungent dishes, while another prefers milder ones, so assuredly not everyone's ears are pleased by the sound of the same mode" (Palisca 133).

The troubadours were conscious of the needs and tastes of their audience, and composed their songs with the knowledge that they would be heard. Raimon Miraval reveals that the public performance and reception of a song constituted the primary purpose of his composing:

> Cel que no vol auzir chansos
> de nostra compaignia.is gar,
> qu'eu chan per mon cors alegrar
> e per solatz dels compaignos,
> e plus per so q'endevenques
> en chansson c'a midonz plagues,
> c'autra voluntatz no.m destreing
> de solatz de ble capteing. (Switten 10.1-8)

> (He who does not wish to hear songs, let him avoid our company, for I sing for my own delight and for the distraction of my companions, and even more so that it may occur that in singing I might please my lady, for no other desire, of pleasure or of fine conduct, compels me. [Switten 183])

Peire d'Alvernhe affects to have little concern for his hearers as he boasts of the effect his song will have on them:

> Cui bon vers agnad'a auzir
> de me, lo cosselh qu'el escout
> aquest c'ara comens a dir;
> que pus li er sos cors assis
> dn ben entendre.ls sos e.ls motz,
> ja non dira qu'el anc auzis
> melhors ditz trobatz, luinh ni prop.
> (Del Monte 3.1-7)

> (Anyone for whom fine poetry (verse) is pleasant to hear from me, I advise to listen to this one which I'm now about to recite; for once his heart is set on hearing well the melody and the words, he will never say that he ever heard better things said in verse, far or near. [Press 88-89])

When a jongleur performed for a medieval audience, his attempts to present a true revelation of personal feelings through song succeeded in communicating the desired emotion to his listeners because they were already disposed towards courtly love — their hearts were "set on hearing well the melody and the words" — and they believed in the emotive power of music.

The emotional effects of music have not diminished with the onset of polyphony and the diversity that the twentieth century has brought to vocal music. Suzanne Langer comments that the "belief in the physical power" of music continues in modern society. "Music is known," she writes, "to affect pulse-rate and respiration, to facilitate or disturb concentration, to excite or relax the organism, while the stimulus lasts," and when "words and the pathos of the human voice are added to the musical stimulus . . . the proposition that music arouses emotions in the listener does not seem, offhand, like a fantastic or mythical assertion" (212-13). Feelings and music are still connected in our minds, even if psychologists are unlikely to advocate singing as a cure for insanity, as Aesclepiades did. Still, a modern audience attends a concert expecting an emotional experience, and believes that while they are under the influence of music, they have the feelings being described by the singer. In our aural reception of a song we have something in common with a medieval audience, and if scholarly analysis seems to remove our perspective of the songs from the composers' intentions, perhaps we should experience them through an aural rather than an academic medium. As one sympathizes with the emotions expressed by the singer through the sound and meaning of sung music and language, one can experience the song in the same manner as a twelfth-century audience would have done; transported into an oral environment, one gains with the listening experience, an appreciation of song in accord with the troubadours' intentions. The historical authenticity of performance techniques (with or without accompaniment, reproduced medieval or modern instruments, strict interpretation of the notated score or liberal improvisation) matters little; as long as the performance moves the audience, the song will have achieved its desired effect. "When we hear a song," suggests Christopher

Page, "we are hearing an echo of voices which, as if by some miracle, have not been silenced despite the passage of seven or eight hundred years" (vii).

Peter Rabinowitz asserts that in order to fully understand a song, one must take at least a step in the direction "from a study of the score itself to a study of the listener and the way the music is experienced" (194). Jonathan Beck agrees that "recorded performances of medieval lyric poetry can be useful . . . necessary even — for any proper study of the particular nature and problems of troubadour and trouvère lyric" (419-20). Unfortunately, the predominance of structural analysis has caused many scholars to forget the listening experience and lose the essence and primary purpose of the Provençal songs. A performance situation, whether experienced as singer or listener, can endow the troubadour repertoire as we know it with an enchanting vitality which brings to life all the sensuality and spirituality, playfulness and pathos, simplicity and intellect which lies dormant in printed word and melody.

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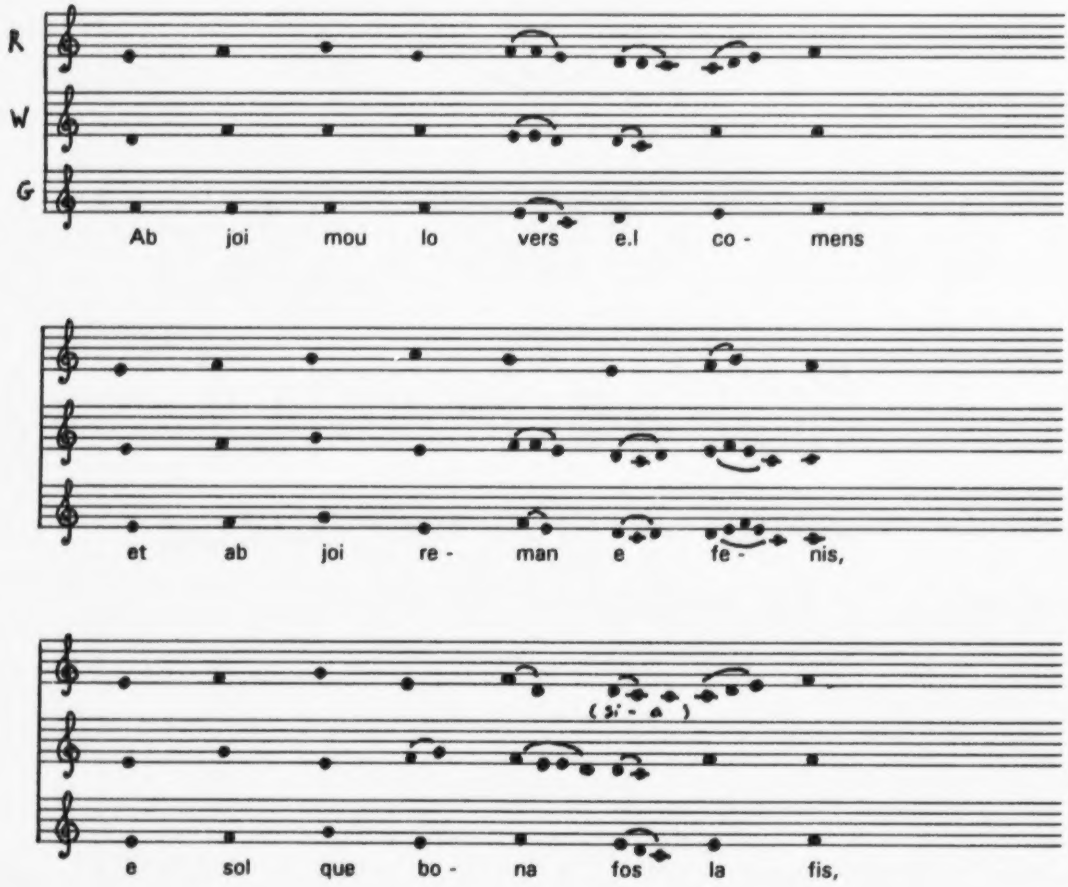
Appendix

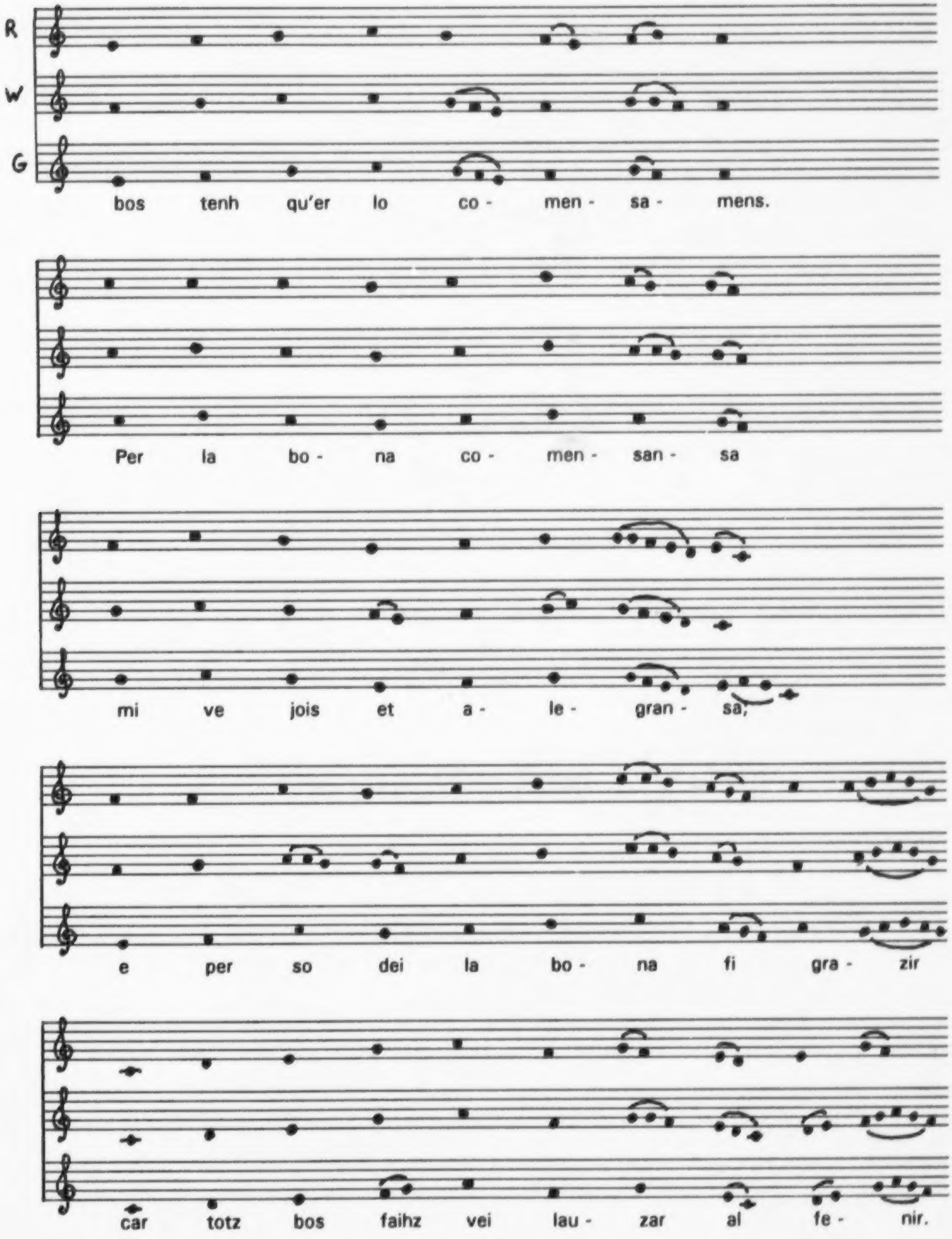
Bernart de Ventadorn: "Ab joi mou lo vers e.l comens"

Melody: MSS R 57b, W 202a, G 9c

Text: Nichols 1, p. 43-44

P-C 70,1


R
W
G
Ab joi mou lo vers e.l co - mens
et ab joi re - man e fe - nis,
(si - a)
e sol que bo - na fos la fis,


R
W
G
bos tenh qu'er lo co - men - sa - mens.
Per la bo - na co - men - san - sa
mi ve jois et a - le - gran - sa;
e per so dei la bo - na fi gra - zir
car totz bos faihz vei lau - zar al fe - nir.

I. Ab joi mou lo vers e.l comens
et ab joi reman e fenis,
e sol 1ue bona fos la fis,
bos tenh qu'er lo comensamens.
Per la bona comensansa
mi ve jois et alegransa;
e per so dei la bona fi grazir
car totz bos faihz vei lauzar al fenir.

II. Si m'apodera jois e.m vens,
meravilh' es com o sofris
car no dic e non esbrüis
per cui sui tan gais e jauzens.
Mas greu veiretz fin' amansa
ses paor e ses doptansa
c'ades tem om vas so c'ama, falhir,
per qu'eu no.m aus de parlar enardir.

III. D'una re m'aonda mos sens,
c'anc nulhs om mo joi no.m enquis,
qu'eu volonters no l'en mentis;
car no.m par bos essenhamens
ans es foli' et efansa
qui d'amor a benanansa
ni.n vol so cor ad autre descobrir,
si no l'en pot o valer o servir.

IV. Non es enois ni falhimens
ni vilania, so m'es vis,
mas d'ome can se fai devis
d'autrui amor ni conoissens.
Enoyos, e que'us enansa,
si.m faitz enoi ni pesansa?
Chascus se vol de so mestier formir;
me cofondetz e vos no.n vei jauzir.

V. Ben estai a domn' ardimens
entr' avols gens e mals vezis,
e s'arditz cors no l'afortis,
greu pot esser pros ni valens.
Per qu'eu prec n'aya membransa
la bel' en cui ai fiansa
que no.s chamje per paraulas ni.s vir
qu'enemics, c'ai, fatz d'enveya morir.

VI. Anc sa bela bocha rizens
non cuidei baizan me träis,
car ab un doutz baizar m'aucis
si ab autre no m'es guirens;
c'atretal m'es per semblansa
com de Peläus la lansa
que del seu colp no podi'om garir
si qutra vetz no s'en fezes ferir.

VII. Bela domna, .l vostre cors gens
e.lh vostre belh olh m'an conquis
e.l doutz esgartz e lo clars vis
e.l vostre bels essenhamens
que, can be m'en pren esmansa,
de beautat no.us trob egansa.
La genser etz c'om posc' el mon chauzir,
o no i vei clar dels olhs ab que'us remir.

VIII. Bels Vezers, senes doptansa
sai que vostre pretz enansa,
que tantz sabetz de plazers far e dir,
de vos amar no.s pot nuls om sofrir.

IX. Ben dei aver alegransa,
qu'en tal domn' ai m'esperansa,
que, qui'n ditz mal, no pot plus lag mentir
e qui'n ditz be, no pot plus bel ver dir.

1. With joy embarking I begin the *vers*, and with joy concluding it will end. Only when the ending is good, do I find the beginning good. In a good beginning, joy and happiness come to me, and so I shall welcome the good ending for I see all good deeds applauded at their end.

2. If joy overcomes and conquers me, it is a wonder that I endure it, since I keep silence, not disclosing why I am so gay and happy. But you will hardly see a true lover without reserve and shyness, for a man is always afraid of failing the one he loves; therefore I dare not be bold and speak.

3. My common sense helps me in one thing: no man ever asked about my joy to whom I did not gladly lie about it. For it does not seem to me good manners, rather it is foolish and childish, for one who has good luck in love to be willing to reveal his heart to another, unless it can benefit or serve him.

4. I hold that there is no vexation, vice, or villainy but that of the man who becomes the spy of other people's love. Say, meddler, what good does it do you to cause my worry? Each man wants to manage his own affairs: you ruin me, yet I do not see you happy about it.

5. Courage serves a lady well amid mean people and evil neighbors; and if a stout heart does not give her strength, she is unlikely to be distinguished or admirable. Therefore, I beg the beautiful woman, in whom I have faith, to be mindful of this and not to change or alter because of rumors. Then I can make my enemies dies of envy.

6. I never thought her beautiful, laughing mouth would betray me with a kiss, yet with a sweet kiss she slays me, unless she revives me with another. Her kiss, I think, is like the lance of Peleus, from whose thrust a man could not be cured unless he were wounded by it once again.

7. Beautiful lady, your delicate form and lovely eyes, your soft glance, radiant face and charming ways have conquered me; for, as I judge it, your equal in beauty cannot be found. Your are the most beautiful that one could choose in all the world, or else I am not seeing clearly with the eyes that look upon you.

8. Bel Vezer, I know without a doubt that your worth increases, for you are so well-versed in saying and doing pleasing things that no man can keep from loving you.

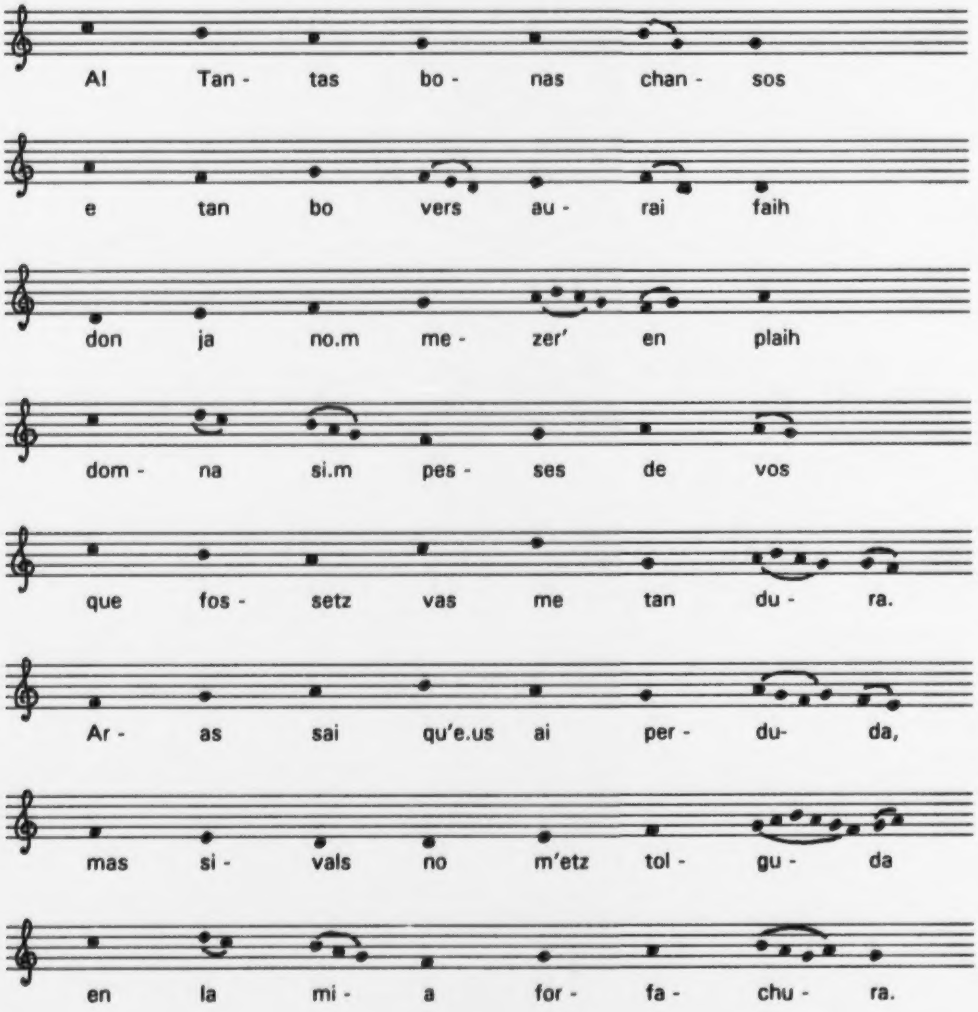
9. Indeed, I should have great joy, for I place my hope in such a woman that whoever speaks ill of her cannot tell a more vicious lie, and whoever speaks well of her cannot utter a more beautiful truth.

Bernart de Ventadorn: "A! Tantas bonas chansos"

Melody: MS R 58a

Text: Nichols 8, p. 62-64

P-C 70,8


A! Tan - tas bo - nas chan - sos
e tan bo vers au - rai faih
don ja no.m me - zer' en plaih
dom - na si.m pes - ses de vos
que fos - setz vas me tan du - ra.
Ar - as sai qu'e.us ai per - du- da,
mas si - vals no m'etz tol - gu - da
en la mi - a for - fa - chu - ra.

I. A! Tantas bonas chansos
e tan bo vers aurai faih
don ja no.m mezer' en plaih
domna si.m pesses de vos
que fossetz vas me tan dura.
Aras sai qu'e.us ai perduda,
mas sivals no m'etz tolguda
en la mia forfachura.

II. Vers es que manhtas sazos
m'era be dih e retraih
que m'estara mal e laih
c'ames et amatz no fos.
Mas lai on Amors s'atura
er greu forsa defenduda,
si so coratge no muda
si c'alors meta sa cura.

III. Mas era sui tan joyos
que no.m sove del maltraih.
D'ira e d'esmai m'a traih
ab sos bels olhs amoros,
de que.m poizon' e.m fachura
cilh que m'a joya renduda,
c'anc pois qu'eu l'agui veguda
non agui sen ni mezura.

IV. Mout i fetz Amors que pros,
car tan ric joi m'a pertraih;
tot can m'avia forfaih
val ben aquest guizerdos.
Aissi.l fenis ma rancura
que sa valors e s'ayuda
m'es a tal cocha venguda;
totz sos tortz i adrechura.

V. Qui ve sas belas faissos
ab que m'a vas se atraih
pot be saber atrazaih
que sos cors es bels e bos
e blancs sotz la vestidura
— eu non o dic mas per cuda —
que la neus can ilh es nuda
par vas lei brun' et escura.

VI. Domna si'st fals enveyos
que mainh bo jorn ma'an estraih

s'i metion en agaih
per saber com es de nos,
per dih d'avol gen tafura
non estetz ges esperduda;
ja per me non er saubuda
l'amors, be.n siatz segura.

VII. Bels Vezers un'aventura
avetz et es ben saubuda
qued om que.us aya veguda
de vos no fara rancura.

VIII. Chanso vai t'en a La Mura,
mo Bel Vezer me saluda;
qui c'aya valor perduda,
la sua creis e melhura.

1. Ah, so many good songs and such good verse I would have made, Lady, in which I would not have complained if I might have thought of you, who were so harsh to me. Now I know that I have lost you. But at least you have not been taken from me through my own fault.

2. It is true that often I said to myself that she was mean and spiteful to me, for I loved and was not loved. But where Love attacks, the fort is held only with great difficulty, unless Love changes his mind and directs his attention elsewhere.

3. But now I am so joyous that I do not remember the mistreatment. She who has restored joy to me has lured me away from anger and dismay with her beautiful loving eyes — those same ones with which she bewitched and enchanted me. For ever since I saw her I have had neither wit nor composure.

4. Love labored brilliantly there, in preparing such rich joy for me. This reward is fair compensation for all the harm of which Love has been guilty to me. And so ends my rancor, since his strength and succor so come to me in my urgent need that they atone for all his wrongs.

5. Whoever sees the beautiful features with which she has attracted me may truly know that her body is fine and beautiful and white under her clothing (I speak only from imagination) so that the newfallen snow seems brown and dark compared to her.

6. Lady, even if these false, envious men, who have stolen many good days from me, have been watching to find out how it is with us, you are still not lost through the chatter of base, knavish louts. For our love is not known through me; you may be well assured of that.

7. Bel Vezer, one thing about you is well-known: that whoever saw you would not hold it against you.

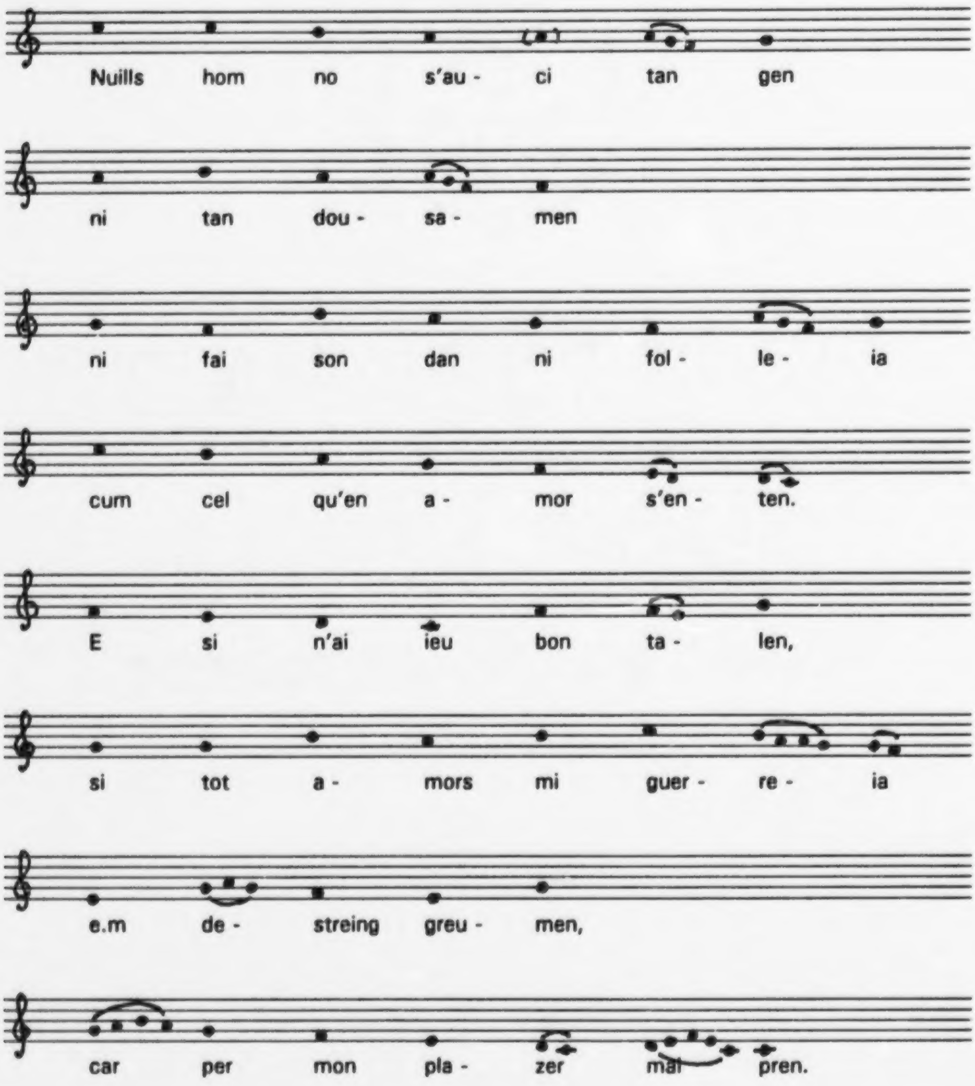
8. Song, go off to La Mura; greet my Bel Vezer for me. No matter who else has lost worthiness, hers increases and grows better.

Peirol: "Nuills hom no s'auci tan gen"

Melody: MS G 49d

Text: Aston 3, p. 45-46

P-C 366,22


Nuills hom no s'au - ci tan gen
ni tan dou - sa - men
ni fai son dan ni fol - le - ia
cum cel qu'en a - mor s'en - ten.
E si n'ai ieu bon ta - len,
si tot a - mors mi guer - re - ia
e.m de - streing greu - men,
car per mon pla - zer mal pren.

I. Nuills hom no s'auci tan gen
ni tan dousamen
ni fai son dan ni folleia
cum cel qu'en amor s'enten.
E si n'ai ieu bon talen,
si tot amors mi guerreia
e.m destreing greumen,
car per mon plazer mal pren.

II. Una dompn' am finamen
don, mon escien,
m'er a morir de l'enveia,
tant es de fin pretz valen.
E si plus noca n'aten,
on qu'ill sia, lai sopleia
vas lei franchamen
mos cors qui la ve soven.

III. Estrains consiriers m'en ve
e si gaire.m te
cum er? C'ades mi sordeia.
Tort n'ai ieu mezeis. De que?
Quar non am si co.s cove
tal dompna c'amar mi deia;
qu'esta, per ma fe,
non deu sol penssar de me.

IV. Mas pero qan s'esdeve
qu'ieu li parli re,
ges mas paraulas no.m neia,
anz vei qu'escouta las be.
Del reprovier mi sove;
'qui non contraditz, autreia'.
Aura.n doncs merce?
Tant o vuoill qu'ieu non o cre!

V. Sol per bel semblan qe.m fai
taing qe.m teigna gai
e qu'en bon esper esteia,
mas per sa valor m'esmai.
Ai! bona dompna, si.us plai,
la vostra franquesa veia
lo gran mal qu'ieu trai,
don ia ses vos non gerrai!

VI. Chanssos, vas la bella vai;
per te.il mandarai

que.l res es que plus mi greia
car tant loing de mi estai.
E puois enaissi s'eschai,
sobre totas res la.m preia
qe.il soveigna lai
de so don ieu cossir sai.

VII. Bona dompna, de vos ai
tal desir e tal enveia,
que res el mon mai
tan fort al cor no.m estai.

1. No man finds a death so fair and sweet nor seeks his own hurt or behaves so foolishly as he who sets his mind on love. And so I am in good heart, although love besets and harasses me sorely, for I accept evil as my pleasure.

2. I love a lady truly on whose account, I think, I am like to die of desire, of such true and excellent worth is she. And if I never expect greater reward, wherever she may be my heart, which beholds her often, submits freely to her.

3. A strange inquietude besets me, and if it lasts, what will happen? For already it is growing worse for me. I am myself at fault. And why? Because I do not love as is fitting a lady who may return my love; for this one, by my faith, must not even think of me.

4. But when it befalls that I address her, never does she forbid me to speak to her, but, on the contrary, I see she hearkens well to my words. I recall the proverb: 'Silence gives consent.' Will she therefore have pity? So much do I desire it that I do not believe it!

5. If only because of the fair countenance she shows me, it is fitting that I be gay and remain in good hope, but on account of her great worth am I troubled. Alas! sweet lady, if it please you, may you in your knidness behold the misfortune that I suffer, and of which I shall never be cured without you.

6. Go, O song, to my fair lady; by you will I inform her that she is the one who most grieves me since she is so far from me. And since it thus befalls, beg her above all, on my behalf, to remember yonder that which occupies my thoughts here.

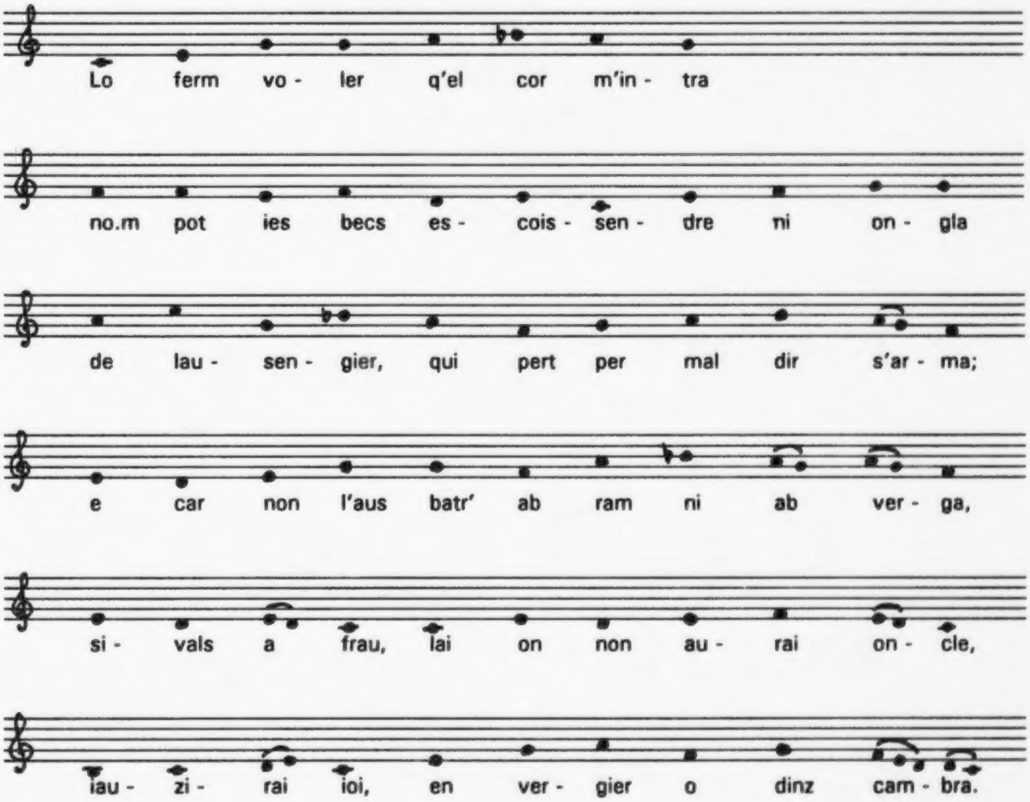
7. Sweet lady, for you have I such desire and longing that nothing else in the world is so near to my heart.

Arnaut Daniel: "Lo ferm voler q'el cor m'intra"

Melody: MS G 73b

Text: Toja 5, p. 173; translation, Goldin 221-223

P-C 29,14


Lo ferm vo - ler q'el cor m'in - tra
no.m pot ies becs es - cois - sen - dre ni on - gla
de lau - sen - gier, qui pert per mal dir s'ar - ma;
e car non l'aus batr' ab ram ni ab ver - ga,
si - vals a frau, lai on non au - rai on - cle,
iau - zi - rai ioi, en ver - gier o dinz cam - bra.

I. Lo ferm voler q'el cor m'intra
no.m pot ies becs escoissendre ni ongla
de lausengier, qui pert per mal dir s'arma;
e car non l'aus batr' ab ram ni ab verga,
sivals a frau, lai on non aurai oncle, 5
iauzirai ioi, en vergier o dinz cambra.

II. Qan mi soven de la cambra
on a mon dan sai que nuills hom non intra
ans me son tuich plus que fraire ni oncle,
non ai membre no.m fremisca, neis l'ongla,
aissi cum fai l'enfas denant la verga:
tal paor ai no.l sia trop de l'arma.

III. Del cors li fos, non de l'arma,
e cossentis m'a celat dinz sa cambra!
Que plus mi nafra.l cor que colps de verga
car lo sieus sers lai on ill es non intra;
totz temps serai ab lieis cum carns et ongla,
e non creirai chastic d'amic ni d'oncle.

IV. Anc la seror de mon oncle
non amei plus ni tant, per aqest' arma!
C'aitant vezis cum es lo detz de l'ongla,
s'a liei plagues, volgr' esser de sa cambra;
de mi pot far l'amors q'inz el cor m'intra
mieils a son vol c'om fortz de frevol verga.

V. Pois flori la seca verga
ni d'en Adam mogron nebot ni oncle,
tant fin' amors cum cela q'el cor m'intra
non cuig qu'anc fos en cors, ni eis en arma.
On q'ill estei, fors en plaz', o dins cambra,
mos cors no.is part de lieis tant cum ten l'ongla.

VI. C'aissi s'enpren e s'enongla
mos cors en lei cum l'escorss' en la verga;
q'ill m'es de ioi tors e palaitz e cambra,
e non am tant fraire, paren ni oncle:
q'en paradis n'aura doble ioi m'arma,
si ja nuills hom per ben amar lai intra.

VII. Arnautz tramet sa chansson d'ongl' e d'oncle
a grat de lieis que de sa verg' a l'arma,
son Desirat, cui pretz en cambra intra.

1. The firm desire that enters
my heart no beak can tear out, no nail
of the slanderer, who speaks his dirt and loses his soul.
And since I dare not beat him with branch or rod,
then in some secret place, at least, where I'll have no uncle,
I'll have my joy of joy, in a garden or a chamber.

2. When I am reminded of the chamber
where I know, and this hurts me, no man enters —
no, they're all more on guard than brother or uncle —
there's no part of my body that does not tremble, even my nail,
as the child shakes before the rod,
I am afraid I won't be hers enough, with all my soul.

3. Let me be hers with my body, not my soul,
let her hide me in her chamber,
for it wounds my heart more than blows from a rod
that where she dwells her servant never enters;
I will always be as close to her flesh and nail,
and never believe the reproaches of brother or uncle.

4. Not even the sister of my uncle
did I love more, or as much, by my soul,
for as familiar as finger with nail
I would, if it pleased her, be with her chamber.
It can do more as it wills with me, this love that enters
my heart, than a strong man with a tender rod.

5. Since the flower was brought forth on the dry rod,
and from En Adam descended nephews and uncles,
a love so pure as that which enters
my heart never dwelt in body, nor yet in soul.
Wherever she stands, outside in the town or inside her chamber,
my heart is not further away than the length of a nail.

6. For my heart takes root in her and grips with its nail,
holds on like bark on the rod,
to me she is joy's tower and palace and chamber,
and I do not love brother as much, or father, or uncle;
and there'll be double joy in Paradise for my soul,
if a man is blessed for loving well there and enters.

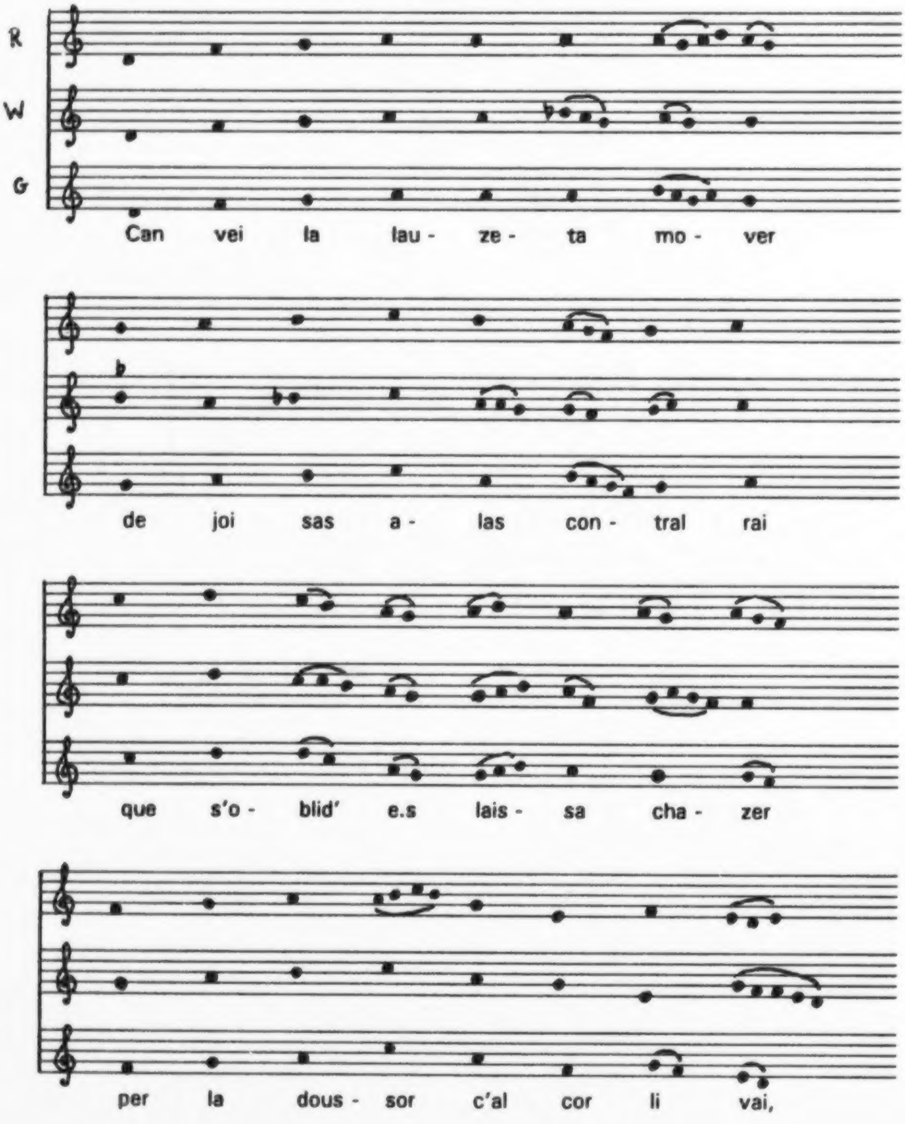
7. Arnaut sends his song of the nail and the uncle,
to please her who rules his soul with her rod,
to his Desired, whose glory in every chamber enters.

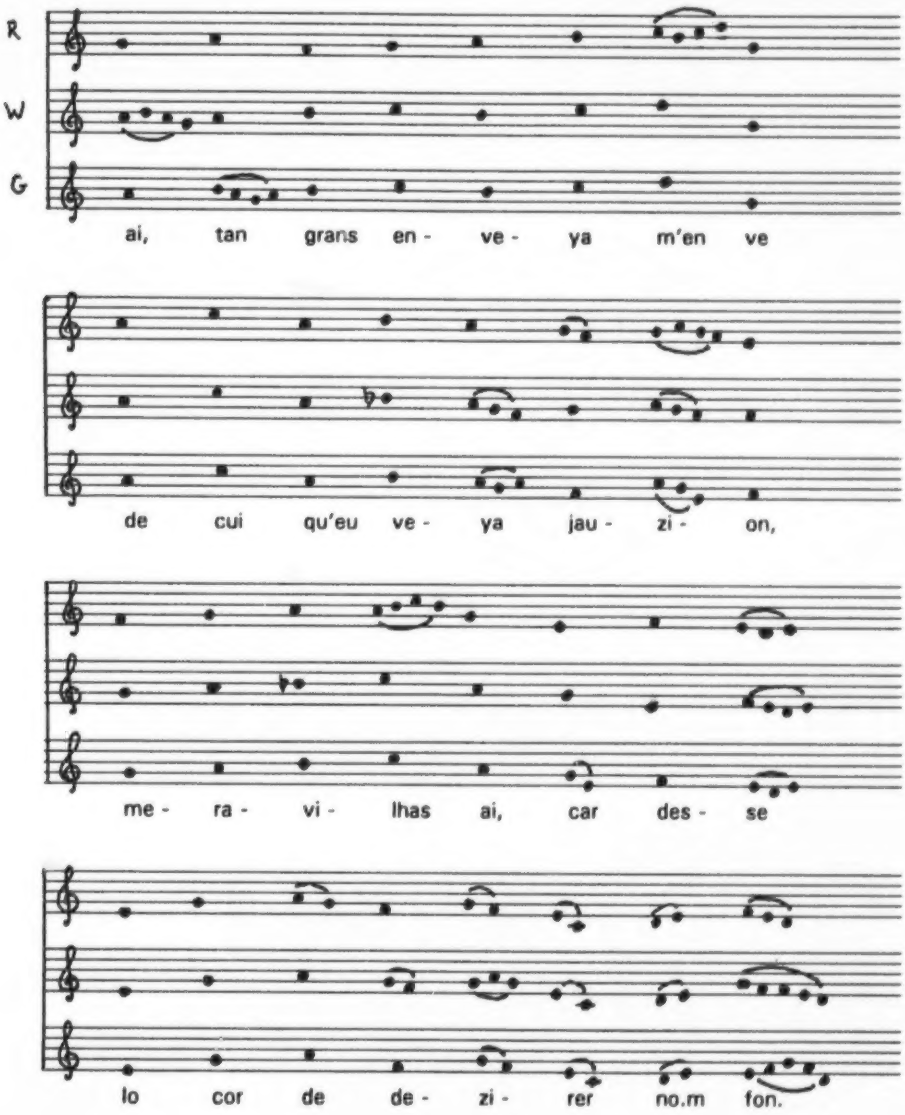
Bernart de Ventadorn: "Can vei la lauzeta mover"

Melody: MSS R 56d, W 190d, G 10a

Text: Nichols 43, p. 166-68

P-C 70,43


R
W
G
Can vei la lau - ze - ta mo - ver
de joi sas a - las con - tral rai
que s'o - blid' e.s lais - sa cha - zer
per la dous - sor c'al cor li vai,


R
W
G
ai, tan grans en - ve - ya m'en ve
de cui qu'eu ve - ya jau - zi - on,
me - ra - vi - lhas ai, car des - se
lo cor de de - zi - rer no.m fon.

I. Can vei la lauzeta mover
de joi sas alas contral rai
que s'oblid' e.s laissa chazer
per la doussor c'al cor li vai,
ai, tan grans enveya m'en ve 5
de cui qu'eu veya jauzion,
meravilhas ai, car desse
lo cor de dezirer no.m fon.

II. Ai, las, tan cuidava saber
d’amor e tan petit en sai,
car eu d’amar no.m posc tener
celeis don ja pro non aurai.
Tout m’a mo cor e tout ma’ me
e se mezeis e tot lo mon,
e can se.m tolc, no.m laisset re
mas dezirer e cor volon.

III. Anc non agui de me poder
ni no fui meus de l’or’ en sai
que.m laisset en sos olhs vezer
en un miralh que mout me plai.
Miralhs, pus me mirei en te,
m’an mort li sospir de preon
c’aissi.m perdei com perdet se
lo bels Narcisus en la fon.

IV. De las domnas me dezesper.
Ja mais en lor no.m fiarai,
c’aissi com las solh chaptener,
enaissi las deschaptenrai.
Pois vei c’una pro no m’en te
va leis que.m destrui e.m cofon,
totas las dopt’ e las mescre,
car be sai c’atretals se son.

V. D’aisso.s fa be femna parer
ma domna, per qu’e.lh o retrai,
car no vol so c’om deu voler
e so c’om li deveda fai.
Chazutz sui en mala merce
et ai be faih co.l fols en pon,
e no sai per que m’esdeve
mas car trop puyei contra mon.

VI. Merces es perduda per ver,
et eu non o saubi anc mai,
car cilh qui plus en degr’aver
no.n a ges, et on la querrai?
A, can mal sembla, qui la ve,
qued aquest chaitiu deziron
que ja ses leis non aura be
laisse morir, que no l’aon.

VII. Pus ab midons no.m pot valer
precs ni merces ni.l dreihz qu'eu ai,
ni a leis no ven a plzer
qu'eu l'am, je mais no.lh o dirai.
Aissi.m part de leis e.m recre.
Mort m'a e per mort li respon,
e vau m'en pus ilh no.m rete,
chaitius, en issilh, no sai on.

VIII. Tristans, ges no.n auretz de me,
qu'eu m'en vau, chaitius, no sai on.
De chantar me gic e.m recre,
e de joi e d'amor m'escon.

1. When I see the lark beat his wings for joy against the sun's ray, until, for the sheer delight which goes to his heart, he forgets to fly and plummets down, then great envy of those whom I see filled with happiness comes to me. I marvel that my heart does not melt at once from desire.

2. Alas! I thought I knew so much about love, but really, I know so little. For I cannot keep myself from loving her from whom I shall have no favor. She has stolen from me my heart, myself, herself and all the world. When she took herself from me, she left me nothing but desire and a longing heart.

3. Never have I been in control of myself or even belonged to myself from the hour she let me gaze into her eyes: — that mirror which pleases me so greatly. Mirror, since I saw myself reflected in you, deep sighs have been killing me. I have destroyed myself just as the beautiful Narcissus destroyed himself in the fountain.

4. I despair of women. No more will I trust them; and just as I used to defend them, now I shall denounce them. Since I see that none aids me against her who destroys and confounds me, I fear and distrust all of them, for I know very well that they are all alike.

5. In such things my lady acts like a woman, and for this I reproach her. She does not want to do what she should, and she does what is forbidden to her. I have fallen into ill-favor, and I have acted like the fool on the bridge; yet I do not know how it happens to me, unless it is that I tried to climb too high.

6. Mercy is lost for good — although I never knew it anyway — for she, who ought most to have it, has none at all. Yet where shall I seek it? How sorry it must appear, when one considers it, that she lets this miserable, longing creature, who has no good without her, perish without helping him.

7. Since neither prayers, pity, nor the justice of my cause help me with my lady, and since my loving her brings her no pleasure, I will say no more to her. I leave her and renounce her. She has slain me and with death I shall answer her. Since she does not retain me, I depart, wretched, into exile, I know not whither.

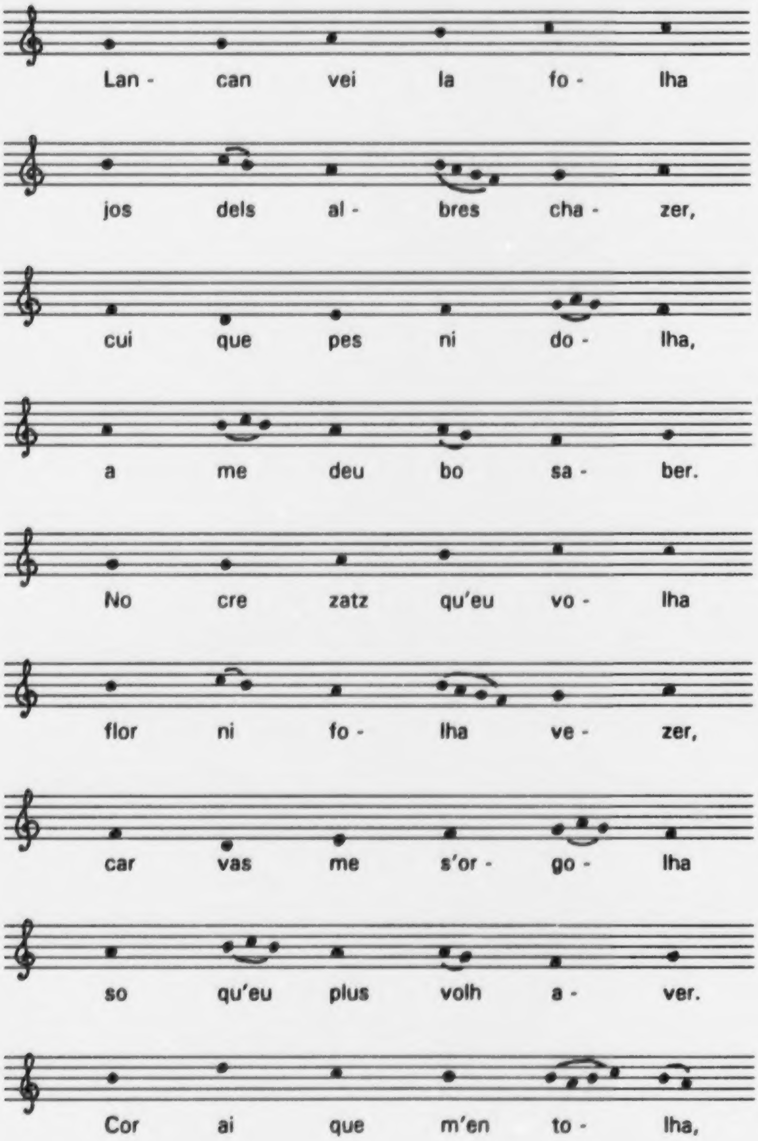
8. Tristan, you shall have nothing more from me, for I depart, wretched, I know not whither. I forsake and renounce singing, and I seek shelter from joy and love.

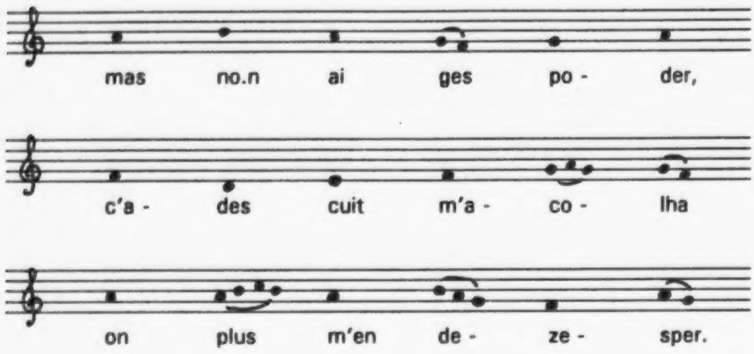
Bernart de Ventadorn: "Lancan vei la folha"

Melody: MS R 68b

Text: Nichols 25, p. 110-13

P-C 70,25


Lan - can vei la fo - lha
jos dels al - bres cha - zer,
cui que pes ni do - lha,
a me deu bo sa - ber.
No cre zatz qu'eu vo - lha
flor ni fo - lha ve - zer,
car vas me s'or - go - lha
so qu'eu plus volh a - ver.
Cor ai que m'en to - lha,


mas no.n ai ges po - der,
c'a - des cuit m'a - co - lha
on plus m'en de - ze - sper.

I. Lancan vei la folha
jos dels albres chazer,
cui que pes ni dolha,
a me deu bo saber.
No crezatz qu'eu volha
flor ni folha vezer,
car vas me s'orgolha
so qu'eu plus volh aver.
Cor ai que m'en tolha,
mas no.n ai ges poder,
c'ades cuit m'acolha
on plus m'en dezesper.

II. Estranha novela
podetz de me auzir,
que can vei la bela
que.m soil' acolhir,
ara no m'apela
ni.m fai vas se venir.
Lo cor sotz l'aissela
m'en vol de dol partir.
Deus, que.l mon chapdela,
si.lh platz, me'n lais jauzir,
que s'aissi.m revela
mo.i a mas del morir.

III. Non ai mais fiansa
en agur ni en sort,
que bon' esperansa
m'a cofundut e mort,
que tan lonh me lansa
la bela cui am fort,

can li quer s'amansa,
com s'eu la'gues gran tort.
Tan na'i de pezansa
que totz m'en desconort,
mas no.n fatz semblansa
c'ades chant e deport.

IV. Als no.n sai que dire
mas mout fatz gran folor
car am ni dezire
del mon la belazor.
Be deuri' aucire
qui anc fetz mirador,
can be m'o cossire,
no.n ai guerrer peyor.
Ja.l jorn qu'ela.s mire
ni pens de sa valor,
no serai jauzire
de leis ni de s'amor.

V. Ja per drudaria
no m'am, que no.s cove.
Pero si.lh plazia
que.m fezes cal que be,
eu li juraria
per leis e per ma fe
que.l bes que.m faria
no fos saubutz per me.
En son plazer sia,
qu'eu sui en sa merce.
Si.lh platz que m'aucia,
qu'eu no m'en clam de re.

VI. Ben es dreihz qu'eu planha
s'eu pert per mon orgolh
la bona companha
e.l solatz c'aver solh.
Petit me gazanha
lo fols arditz qu'eu colh,
car vas me s'estranha
so qu'eu plus am e volh.
Orgolhs, Deus vos franha,
c'ara.n ploron mei olh.
Dreihz es que.m sofranha
totz jois, qu;eu eis lo.m tolh.

VII. Encontra.l damnatge
e la pena qu'eu trai,
ai mo bon usatge,
c'ades consir de lai.
Orgolh e folatge
e vilania fai
qui.n mou mo coratge
ni d'alre.m met en plai,
car melho messatge
en tot lo mon no.n ai
e man lo'lh ostatge
entro qu'eu torn de sai.

VIII. Domna, mo coratge,
.l melhor amic qu'eu ai,
vos man en ostatge
entro qu'eu torn de sai.

1. It should please me to see the leaves fall from the trees, whomever else it may pain or grieve. Do not believe that I am interested in seeing flowers or leaves: the one I want most to have is haughty to me. I have a mind to leave her, but I don't have the strength because even in the depths of despair, I always think she is about to accept me.

2. You may hear strange news of me, for now when I see the beautiful lady who used to welcome me, she no longer calls me or bids me come to her. My very heart wants to break from sorrow. If it pleases God, who rules the world, may he let me have joy from her, for whe is so obstinate to me that there is nothing to do but die.

3. I no longer trust in augury or fortune, because hoping in good faith has been my ruin, since the beautiful lady, whom I love so much, rebuffs me when I seek her love, as though I had done her great wrong. I have such pain that I am completely discouraged; but I do not look it, because I am always singing and playing.

4. I can say nothing but this: I act with very great folly in loving and desiring the most beautiful lady in the world. I should certainly kill whoever contrived the mirror. In fact, when I think about it, I have no worse enemy. Surely, on the day when she looks at herself and thinks of her worth, I shall enjoy neither her nor her love.

5. Indeed, she does not love me with fleshly love, for it would not be fitting. However, if it pleased her to do something good for me, I would swear to her, by her and by my faith, that I would not make known any good that she might do me. Let it be as she will, for I am at her mercy. She may even kill me if she pleases; I shall not complain.

6. It is right for me to complain though, if I lose the good company and comfort I used to have on account of my own pride. The foolish boldness which I show gains little for me, when what I most love and want is estranged from me. Pride, may God crush you, for now my eyes

weep. It is only right if all joy fails me, for I deprive myself of it.

7. Against the loss and pain which I suffer, I have my good habit: that I always think about that place where she is. Whoever diverts my heart and involves me with something else acts with pride, madness and villainy; for I have no better messenger in all the world than my heart, and I send it to her as a hostage until I return from here.

8. Lady, my heart, the best friend I have, I send you as hostage until I return from here.

Cantarai d'aquestz trobadors
que canton de maintas colors

- Peire d'Alvernhe